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THE DWELLER'S
— DAUGHTER —

1. Cliff dwellers - Fiction

A.H.



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Abbott

THE CLIFF DWELLER'S DAUGHTER,

OR,
HOW HE LOVED HER.

AN INDIAN ROMANCE OF PREHISTORIC TIMES.

BY
CHARLES T. ABBOTT, M.D.



F. TENNYSON NEELY,
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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED

TO

MY SYMPATHETIC CALIFORNIAN FRIEND,

MRS. DE E. MARTIN,

AS A MARK OF THE ESTEEM IN WHICH SHE IS HELD BY
THE AUTHOR.

HOW HE LOVED HER.

CHAPTER I.

“Ан! Thundercloud, this is indeed a spot filled with beauty. See that stream trickling, and purling down yonder cañon? It is living water I am sure, and I’ll be bound the land round here will produce the waving corn to profusion. Those rugged cliffs, also, must contain caves in plenty, in which to build our castles of refuge. I would that the savage tribes might pass us by, but that can hardly be, since they are ever on the watch for such as we who are peaceful, and would only live upon the produce of the soil, raised with toil and care. But let us go farther, and we will decide

upon our future abode, for I think we might roam farther, and fare worse."

The above speech was made by Wisdom, the chief of a tribe of wanderers, who, driven from their home by attacking savages, had decided to seek in the far north a place to settle in and there cultivate the lands for their sustenance.

He and his sub-chief, had hurried forward, to seek out a spot for the tribe to camp on, and their eyes had indeed found the place above all others, for the planting of their tribe. Many moons had passed since they had traveled by devious ways from the castle they still mourned for. And now the Merciful One had led them to a paradise on earth, and here they would found a new home.

Wisdom was a man fit for the gods—of stature fully five feet and ten inches, with brawny chest, and muscular development. He carried his stone hatchet as a man born to rule, while strung across

his shoulders his bow and arrows lent a martial appearance to the brave chief. His moccasins were worn by constant travel, while the skins that covered him disclosed his prowess as a hunter as well as leader.

Thundercloud was perhaps an inch shorter and was clothed and armed like his chief. His face and manner showed that he did not belie his name. Stern and dark was ever the sub-chief's appearance, and brave indeed was the tribesman who would dare to balk this man of his way. What he willed was done, and though few his words, his deeds expressed his feelings as nothing else could.

'Twas he, who, scrambling and crawling through willows and canes at last stood at the foot of a massive cliff, which reared its walls abruptly in his way; and short and gruff was his cry of "Good!" as looking upward, a cave of large dimensions was seen some distance above.

"There is the place for our castle, Wisdom. There we may defy anything or any one that may dare to attack us."

"What is that?" whispered Wisdom; for something large and burly seemed to be hastening toward them. "A bear! It is an immense bear. Where shall we flee, to escape its fierce attack?"

They drew back softly into the shadows of some trees, and Thundercloud was soon hidden behind a huge cedar, whose trunk showed the scars of many winters. Here, carefully drawing an arrow from a bundle, he quickly examined the flint head, and stringing his bow, calmly awaited the coming of the bear. It was an immense silver tip, and as it was advancing with the wind, had not scented the men hidden by the trunks of the many cedars. Twang! and an arrow, aimed with deadly effect, pierced the bear's skin. The animal knew he was mortally wounded, yet he growled as he

quickly bit a piece of fur from his coat, to stop therewith the spouting blood, but another arrow pierced him through and through. Folding his paws over his head the monarch of the forests rolled down an incline to strike an intervening tree, and there stretch out in death.

“That was a fine shot, Thundercloud,” cried Wisdom. “This bear will feed the tribe many days. The priests will sing of thy bravery for many generations, and thy name shall be handed down as a slayer of bears.”

Scrambling upward, they examined the well-formed teeth, and the mighty claws of this monarch of the woods; gloated over the meat in store for the tribe, and considering the omen good, determined to build them a castle near this spot.

The plain, inclosed by tall cliffs, could be seen to its full extent from the rising ground, and Wisdom said: “We shall stay

here, Thundercloud;" for gazing upon the verdant plain, his eyes grew prophetic, and he saw in his mind's eye the fields green with corn, and the ditches carrying water, with groups of his people stooping over the rich black soil.

"Rainstorm has followed quickly," he said, as a man was seen advancing before a company of men and women over the leaf-strewn ground; "we must meet them and lead them to the camping ground."

Joyful indeed were the wanderers upon reaching such a verdant spot and quickly the bundles were thrown upon the ground; the children rolling and laughing, 'neath the wide-spreading cottonwoods, or shooting tiny arrows at the wary birds chirping upon their branches; the men with wondering grunts at the prowess of their sub-chief, had drawn the dead bear to the camp, and long steaks were grilling over the

swift-blazing fires lit by the women from the living embers carried by them.

Hope and joy rested on the camp that night, for had they not plenty to eat and drink, and were not their wanderings now o'er? Here they would build them a home.

The wornout people slept well, but ere the sun rose in the east, the priest had wakened them to meet the first rays of the glorious orb of light. Soon the fires blazed and the cooking steaks spread a pleasant aroma around. Quickly the morning meal was finished, and Wisdom was dividing into groups the women and men standing round. This one was sent to collect willows, that to cut down cedars, these to carry small rock and stone, those to find a good adobe in order to make mortar for their castle, while others were sent to hunt the wild animals around.

Then, after Wisdom had bid his daugh-

ter Gazelle a loving farewell, he, with Thundercloud, started out to explore the cave and its surroundings. They clambered up the cliffs until they were many feet up, and by dint of much labor, at last entered the cave. There was an immense opening, which ran back, narrowing as it went into the mountain. No enemy could enter from above, and to reach it from the cañon required terrible climbing. This in the face of a waiting enemy, seemed impossible. Thundercloud brushed away the collected bat dung of ages and found a remarkably level floor.

“We shall spread some adobe here, and build our wall to the overhanging rocks, we shall have a castle worth living in, Thundercloud, shall we not?” said Wisdom.

Wisdom called to several men who had followed some distance behind, and who seemed small and dwarfish beside his

height. He showed them places where steps should be cut out with their stone hatchets, leading from the ground upward. In one place a short ladder was placed, and the approaches were ready for the builders. Soon the women with head baskets woven from grass and willow came, bearing clay and rock, and wonderful it was to see the adept manner in which they climbed the dizzy heights. The men stood ready to receive their burdens, and quickly a wall some two feet thick began to take shape. The hollows in the ground were filled in with adobe, and then small hands patted the clay and smoothed off the rough portions, leaving marks of their fingers in the well mixed material. After reaching the height of five feet, the wall would be left to dry, and the men would betake themselves to the woods to cut down trees for the heavy crossbeams.

Some of the women set out to wander

through the woods, gathering piñon nuts, acorns, mesquite beans, or any other herb which they knew was edible.

Among these ran Gazelle, the daughter of Chief Wisdom.

Winsome, indeed, was this maiden of the South. Eyes dark and soft, as the deer from which she took her name. An oval face, surrounded with a dark fringe of thick, black hair, which contained no ornament, though a small necklet of fossil shells strung on deer tendons hung around her neck. A loose jacket of cloth woven from yucca fiber and stained with red and black stripes covered her body, while round her waist was drawn the skin of the fierce lynx. Her tiny feet were thrust into moccasins made from deer skin, which had been rubbed and stretched until it had become as soft as the chamois skin. On her wrists were bracelets of wild lynx teeth, which shone white and glistening on her

rounded arms. Her fingers were as yet undistigured with toil, for was she not the daughter of the wise Chief Wisdom and wherefore should she work?

Many lovers had Gazelle among the men of her tribe, but upon all of them she looked with scorn and contempt. They none of them seemed to her of brave enough mien to suit her. Thundercloud, her father's sub-chief, loved her as the apple of his eye; but though she knew his feelings she gave him no encouragement, and only desired to dance and laugh with the girls of the tribe.

Here she was the leader of all the wild sports in which the maidens took part.

None could run like Gazelle, nor could any find the acorns and nuts for the old women to grind as she could. All the children loved her, and wherever she went there a crowd of the youth of the tribe would be gathered together. But now she seemed cold and taciturn.

"Why is Gazelle so sad to-day?" inquired an imp of a girl, the favorite companion of the maiden. "Has Thundercloud gazed too steadily? or has Rainstorm smiled on others?"

"Be quiet, Sunray," for so the girl was called. "You know the men of the tribe are as naught to me."

"Yes, I know, never since the stranger from the southern castles met you in our old home, have the men of our tribe found favor in your sight."

"Enough, Sunray," she cried, as a deep blush suffused her countenance; "it ill becomes a maiden of my father's tribe to speak thus to me."

The maid, a lithe young girl, daughter of a priest of the sun, withdrew her beady eyes from the face of her companion, and wisely betook herself to the gathering of the acorns which strewed the ground.

"My grandmother," at last she said,

"thinks this is like her father's home. It is long, she says, since such large acorns were crushed by the women, for the life-giving bread and as many birds are twittering in the branches, it must have been years since other men have slept 'neath their shade."

"It seems a beautiful place," said Gazelle, "and animals there are in plenty; but ah, me, I would we were in our old castle, and"—here she stopped, for to her mind came the thought of a tall young stranger, who, stepping quickly by, had asked her one night so long ago, the way to her father, the chief. He had jewels to sell, he had said, from the far south. Yes, well she remembered his handsome face, and upright stature. And the look of surprise with which he had remarked her beauty she still remembered with flushing cheeks. But that was many moons ago, and since then the mountain tribes had

driven them from their home, wanderers upon the face of the earth.

How well she remembered him sitting with her father that night, displaying the blue turquoise, from the southern mines the fossil stones of long ago, and the beautiful arrow-points made of jasper chipped by men who were artists in their work, and which were only used when enemies attacked the castle. Did not her father buy these very bracelets from this stranger who had said that none could wear them with better grace than the beautiful daughter of the chief? His eyes had fastened upon her, with the glance of a lover, as he uttered those words. Ah, well, it was no use brooding here over the memory of a man who very likely she would never see again.

She slowly rose, for hitherto she had been sitting upon the fallen trunk of a cedar which was broken and decaying away.

"Be careful, Sunray, this place is cer-

tainly the resort of poisonous vermin. I thought I saw the head of a serpent protruded from 'neath that rock, and though your father can control the deadly poison with his skill and potions we are some distance from the camp, and the poison acts quickly."

"Little the snake bite terrifies me, for my father has intrusted to my care this little gourd, and its contents will destroy the venom of any poisonous creature, be it even the dreaded tarantula."

Sunray drew from her basket the tiny gourd and disclosed to view the dark colored contents, which, spread on a bite, would destroy all ill effects.

"Ugh!" she said, "how I hate the hairy tarantula; its black eyes seem to glare at one like a mountain lion guarding its cubs, and its great, hairy legs with the piercing claws hold as only grim death can, in its last embrace the corpse of the dead.

"I would I knew what death was, Gazelle! My father says that these poor bodies of ours are but the covering and help for an inner soul to move upon this earth, and that it leaves this body to seek a better and more lovely place."

"Be still, Sunray, it ill-befits a maiden to discuss this thing, and though your father is a priest of the sun, 'tis only the braves who are taught to argue on this great thing, though father has told me that some of them in a trance at the great snake dances have left this frail body to wander at will in strange and wonderful countries."

"But is that not a Wildcat calling us? It must be getting late! and the evening meal should be ready for the men, when they come from their work, especially as they are laboring so steadily to build us a refuge from danger. Your basket is full of acorns, and here have I been

thinking of and mourning for our old home the whole afternoon."

"It is so, Gazelle," replied Sunray with a merry twinkle in her eye. I thought perhaps the handsome stranger had entered your brain from far away and entranced you. For never saw I so sweet a smile upon your lips as when you gazed toward the unseen mountains."

"I think the handsome stranger must have bewitched you, Sunray, for of him alone do you think, and in praise of him your tongue will wag both night and day. Has your father found a suitable place for the worship of the great sun?"

"It seems to me that there are more high mountains, with rounded tops in this place than any we have explored, and surely there will be no trouble to obtain the boulders, wherewith a circle may be formed—the figure that has no beginning and no end. The emblem of the sun, whence my father and the old

men view the rising of the great orb from his bed of sleep. It seems to me that so great a God should never sleep, but lo, at night he sinks to rest, and all the wild beasts, the evil spirits and savage enemies have power to injure and destroy his worshippers. This does not seem right, but I am but an ignorant maiden with little knowledge of these things.

“What have you there, Laughter?” she asked as a small boy ran quickly to them, dangling something from his hand.

“It is new to me,” replied the boy, “and very savage. It hissed and puffed its sides with an anger that was terrible when first I saw it, and now I am taking it to my father; he knows the names of every animal in this world, and can tell me its name and use, I have no doubt. See where my arrow has entered its side. My father tells me that soon I shall shoot as well as he, and that my aim is

surer every day. This was a good shot. I stood at twenty feet from the animal, and aimed behind the foreleg; you see my arrow struck it exactly on the spot."

"My, that was great, Laughter; if only I were a boy, how I would shoot the wild beasts that wander round in the forests."

"Pooh! what do you girls know about shooting? We boys, who soon will be men, are very brave, and all the wild animals will leave this glade to seek a safer hiding-place. Why, there's my father. I must find out what this reptile is. Father! here is a strange animal I shot as it lay basking in the sun. Tell me what it is?"

"Be careful, boy, that is the deadly monster. One bite from its fangs will cause the flesh to rot from your bones. Didst shoot it with your arrow? Well done, that was a shot. At twenty feet you say; soon I shall have to hand my

battle bow to you, for you are getting quite an expert with your weapon."

"Good-evening, Gazelle; have you seen my wife? She is coming with the women from the hills with the acorns and nuts they have gathered. That is good. This is a luxuriant place. Your father has chosen well. Our store will be great this winter, and we shall have no occasion to draw on the corn we carried with us from the south. The sun be with you," he said, and passed her by.

She looked up to the cliffs and spied her father pointing here and directing there. Her grand old father, who feared neither the bear's wild savage grunt, nor the whoop of the mountain tribes.

Her eye, with the instinct of the true cliff dweller, took in the advantages which the present cave gave to the tribe, for no enemy would come to it without permission, while the fields and water would be so close that no time would be

lost in traveling backward and forward.

On a distant hill some men were carrying bowlders and building a low wall round its summit, while, standing like a statue on its peak, an old man directed the placing of the rocks in a continuous circle. The place was distant, but Gazelle had no doubt that this was Serpent, the father of Sunray, and high priest of the tribe, who knew more than any man the stories of their people handed down from father to son. Well she knew every word was true, for did not the priests from other tribes congregate together and recount to each other the ancient times? And woe to him who left one word or syllable from the long, long tale.

He therefore alone should superintend with care the building of the walls; this must be placed thus, and that in such a manner, yet none could gainsay his

orders, for did he not know the reason why the ring should thus be built?

The men seemed tired, and did not respond with the usual activity when he ordered. "It must be late," thought Gazelle. "I shall betake myself to the camp and prepare my father's meal. None can cook as I can, my father says, and he will need some nourishment this evening."

CHAPTER II.

THE evening sun was sinking low, as the weary workers strolled in from their various duties to rest after their day's toil.

Few words were spoken and many were the grunts of contentment, as the men threw themselves beside the blazing fires and watched the women draw hot embers over the mesquite cakes, or waited while the smaller animals brought in by the huntsmen were smeared with clay, and cooked beneath the roasting charcoal. Here some belated house-keeper was still using the matato with skill and energy, cracking the nuts with the well-worn manos, and crushing the whole into a pasty flour. This required skill and care, for often did some chance

blow scatter far and near the flour that was ground with so much labor.

Gazelle was seated at a fire built close to some branches which made a covering for the sleepers, listening to the talk and laughter of the women as they cooked. The deep, guttural replies of the men or the cry of some child ready for its meal and sleep intervening. This served to soften the more strident voices of the women, but soon her father's step awoke her from her reverie, and, hot and tired, he stretched himself beside the fire to obtain his well-earned rest.

"How goes the castle?" questioned Gazelle, as having eaten of the cake and bear steak and drunk from the *ojah* of the cool clear water from the stream, he bent back in contentment and gazed into the starlit heavens.

"Well, the men are pleased with the spot, and therefore work with energy to raise the walls of the refuge to the over-

hanging roof. Come, Thundercloud, and seat yourself beside the fire," he said, as a soft step was heard crunching the leaves and the tall form of the sub-chief loomed out of the darkness.

"Have the men felled any cedars to-day? The work is slow, and some use but few strokes before throwing down the ax to rest," replied the sub-chief; "but ere to-morrow's sun sinks to sleep enough will be cut to lay across the walls the supporting floor beams."

"We must hurry, for soon the summer storms will be here, and we must be under cover before the thunderclouds with their drenching rainfall pours upon the earth. I think they must be terrible round here, for many tall trees have been tore asunder by the lightning's force, and those mountains so near must draw them hither from the surrounding sky.

Thundercloud heard but dimly the

words of the chief, for his gaze was fixed upon the form of Gazelle, who seemed to be unaware of it. She, leaning upon her elbow, was playing the game of balance with small stones upon her hand, and took no heed of her father's talk.

The love glance in Thundercloud's eye seemed to slowly die away until a baleful glare like that of a hunted animal took its place, as he wondered why he seemed as naught to her, and why she took no notice of him. Other maidens had smiles in plenty, for was he not the sub-chief, and would he not lead the tribe when Wisdom had left this troublesome life? Who could hunt the wild bear as he, or had now more honor at the wrestling bouts? Yet her words were calm, and her looks were cold whenever he drew nigh; his muscular strength and commanding mein; had no effect upon her, and she of all the many

women alone would have none of him. He had some time before requested Wisdom to give him his daughter in marriage, but he had said: "The maiden is young. She does not wish to leave her father yet. Give her time, Thundercloud, and she will love you herself." This was many moons ago, and no nearer was he to gaining his wish than he had ever been.

At length Gazelle arose to retire beneath the branches, when Thundercloud, dark and stern, bade the chief good-night, and sought the groups of braves who, with many twigs, were gambling their skins and ornaments.

Wisdom lay gazing into the dark depths of the overhanging heavens, watching the bright stars twinkle and glitter like diamonds in the sky. His eyes were fixed upon two stars that seemed brighter than the rest, and his mind went back to the time when he had

carried his wife, Dancing-feet, to his castle from her southern home. Many changes had taken place since then, and he was growing old.

"Ah! Well he remembered their joy when Gazelle first saw the light of day, and her tiny fingers had clasped his thumb as he sat playing with the infant beside her mother. She will be a beautiful girl, Wisdom," said Dancing-feet, "and you must treat her well, if ever the gods should decide to call me away." She had gone; it almost seemed as if the gods had warned her that soon she must leave this beautiful world. She had gone to bring the water for her home, from the forks, the place where the mountain stream was carried by two diverse ditches to moisten the fields. For here the water was cooler and clearer than lower down. Some waiting savage had seized her, and carried her far into the wilds. But though he and

the braves of the tribe had followed the trail so slightly made for many days and fought the savage tribes that barred their way, no more was Dancing-feet seen by her waiting tribe. But still woes upon woes had followed her loss, for year after year the hostiles had appeared to burn the corn and destroy the ditches until, in desperation, the tribe had left its old home to seek afar a new dwelling-place unknown to their foes. So here lay Wisdom dreaming of the joys he never more might know, for well he loved the fond mother of Gazelle.

To him Gazelle had seemed as if his wife returned in her, and bestowed all her lost love upon him through her smiles.

He knew that Thundercloud would wed the maid, but Gazelle had clung to him and prayed that he would not send her from him. She loved no man, and who would tend her father's wants if she

was taken by another? For this reason he did not seek to compel their union, yet he watched and saw how Thundercloud seemed only to live in the presence of Gazelle, though she was cold as the fallen rocks that lined the base of the cliffs.

Thus he mused until the night air grew cool and the flames of the many fires began to grow dim and dull. Sleep reigned supreme throughout the camp.

What was the cry that seemed to come from the trees that lined the stream? Surely that was one of the children calling for its mother? He would seek it and carry it to its parent, for perchance some savage animal would seize the child while crying there.

He rose, grasping his stone hammer as he did so, and strolled toward where a huge cottonwood overhung the running water. Approaching nearer, the cries had ceased, when looking up he saw two

fiery balls of light gleaming through the leaves of the trees. "A cougar," he thought. "I never supposed that any of those fierce animals were so far north. I shall return and rouse the hunters."

He turned to go, when with one wild spring the savage beast, with many fierce growls, had leaped upon him.

"Thundercloud," he yelled as he fell to the ground from the force of the impact. Immediately the wakened men had rushed to arms, and seizing their bows, drew burning brands from the fires to light their way to where Wisdom and the cougar were locked in mortal combat.

Wisdom had the strength of a giant, but little use was that beside the tearing claws of the cougar. The animal tried to seize him with its teeth, but ere his doing so, the left hand of the chief was thrust within the open jaws, and seizing the tongue with giant grip, rained

blow upon blow upon the head of the savage brute. In the meantime the claws of the animal's hind feet were tearing the flesh in long strips from the struggling man's legs.

Soon the ground was wet with the pouring blood, and the chief, though still fighting bravely, could feel his strength slowly failing, while all his blows upon the head of the cougar but seemed to increase his fierceness. "Be careful as you fire," cried Thundercloud. "When you come upon the struggling pair, get close, and drive the arrow through his heart." He himself had strung his bow and aiming carefully, drove his arrow through and through the quivering chest of the panting brute. With one wild cry the animal grew limp, and its spirit left its body to fight no more.

Wisdom still held its tongue, though his arm was torn with the cruel teeth,

Slowly drawing the front pairs from the chief's back, in which the claws were buried deep, they carefully drew the man from the clutches of the beast.

"Be careful," moaned Wisdom, "my legs are badly torn, and all my strength has left me."

Suddenly his face grew pale as death, and he fainted in their arms.

"He is surely dead," cried one of the men in terror.

"No! no!" cried Serpent, as he hurried up, "but he has lost much blood."

"The spirit has not left his body yet, though methinks it well might leave this poor torn form. Carry him to the wickiup, and I shall bring the healing fluids and perchance he will recover, but many moons will pass ere Wisdom walks again.

"By the sun, he made a gallant fight. No other man could have held his own as Wisdom did against the tearing force of the savage cougar."

With many sobs and tears Gazelle received the bleeding form of her father, and spreading skins upon the ground, gazed upon his pallid face, which seemed to her as the face of the dead.

But soon the cool water poured upon his face drew life to his torn body, and he groaned aloud with the pain of his many wounds. Serpent busied himself in cleansing the torn flesh with his lotions, shaking his head sadly as he did so, and muttering fierce threats against the evil spirits who had sought to slay the chief.

He laid the deer stone upon his wounds, for well he knew the poison of the claws and teeth of all wild animals meant death if not drawn from them; and giving him a tea made from the mountain sage, sat and watched the chief as he threw himself restlessly from side to side, moaning the name of Dancing-feet, his long-lost wife.

Sad was the tribe the next day as they sat round the fires, wondering whether their beloved chief would recover from his many wounds. The women crouched near Gazelle, talking in whispers, or silencing the children when forgetful of their grief they became more noisy.

Gazelle sat with head buried upon her knees, nor would she be comforted by the words of the women.

The tears poured from her eyes as she heard orders given to the workingmen upon the castle walls, in words of command, her name muttered by the sick man, in tones of endearment. And yet when she touched him his wild eyes seemed to know her not, though even as she placed her hand upon his forehead, his mutterings ceased, and he seemed to smile as if with pleasure. Serpent tended the chief with all the skill that he possessed, giving him teas and cleans-

ing the wounds, yet still his skin grew hotter and hotter still.

"He will die," said Serpent to Thundercloud one day, "if his skin draws much more the heat of the sun."

"We must give him the sweat bath or else not many moons hence the chief will be no more."

With care he drew a circle in the ground, and calling the old men, he ordered them to bend the willows in a low dome from side to side. These were covered with skins and the dirt drawn round the edges. He then built a fire near, and picking up round bowlders of *malapais*, threw them upon the blazing fire. Soon the stones were heated enough, and gently carrying the chief, they placed him naked 'neath the dome. Serpent, entering with him, called for heated stones, and pouring water on them, the steam that rose filled the wickiup.

Anxiously the priest watched the sick man, and when the perspiration began to pour from his skin, the old man's joy was great. In a short time he called for help, and the chief was taken to his bed, there to sleep the sleep of a child, his skin cool and his muttering gone.

Great was the contentment of the camp when Serpent informed them of the chief's improvement, and soon the men returned to the work they hitherto had no mind for. The chief awoke next day, and smiled upon the face of his careworn daughter. "Ah! Gazelle, you look tired. Have I been sick? How weak I am, and these hands, they are those of an old man who is about to leave this world. This hand is torn! Ah! now I remember, the cougar. The savage cougar. I remember clutching its thick grating tongue, and feeling the tearing of the beast's sharp claws. Did I overcome the animal?"

“Ay, father! for you held it prone until Thundercloud’s sharp arrow pierced it through and through, but almost hast thou died. Fully ten times has the sun sunk to rest since first they brought thee with blood pouring from thy wounds to our wickiup. Serpent had said ‘the chief he cannot live,’ yet ever he tended thee, fighting the evil spirits which strove to tear thee from us. And now, thank the gods, you are in your right mind, and all will be well again.”

“Show me the skin, Gazelle, I would see the skin of the wild beast that has brought me to such a pass.”

The huntsmen had carefully drawn the skin from the body of the cougar, with claws and head intact. And now they brought it to Wisdom, who scanned with pride the size and beauty of the cougar’s late covering.

“Ah! that was worth a lifetime to fight with such an enemy, and be the win-

ner. Gazelle, those claws shall hang around your neck, for none but the daughter of a chief should be adorned by such. I am tired, bid the young men take it hence, and cure it with care, for so beautiful a skin must not be destroyed."

The chief slowly recovered his strength, but the days seemed long before he could hobble around, for nevermore would Wisdom lead the warriors to battle; the murderous cougar had torn the tendons until his leg contracted as it healed, and the mighty chief, a wreck of his former self, limped about the camp.

In the meantime Thundercloud directed the tribesmen, and every evening saw him sitting near his chief, telling him how the work progressed.

The walls by this time had almost reached the hanging rock, and two rows of beams divided the space into two stories.

Full twenty men had carried the beams, one by one, to the castle walls, and immense was the work to raise them to their place. Across the beams, the women were laying layer upon layer of the twigs of the willow, and across these again a layer of cane. Then was the adobe spread within each crevice, filling all declivities, until a smooth, hard floor was made within the walls. At one side was built a raised platform, and here they slept upon their skins. Small holes were left in the built-up walls, whence the men could watch an enemy below, and above a rampart was built, behind which the men could stand and hurl bowlders collected there upon an attacking force, or shoot their arrows at those that stood afar off.

Wisdom had been taken to inspect the castle, and praised Thundercloud for his skill in carrying on the work. Then he ordered the dividing walls to be built

across for each family as well as the piercing with small openings from room to room. The walls were dry, and soon the women were filling the granaries with stores of mesquite beans and the flesh of the deer dried in the summer sun.

The grain they had they would keep until the spring, for with this they hoped to sow their fields, which some of the men had cleared of the mesquite and cacti that cumbered the soil. The scorching sun had dried the ground, until the slightest movement raised the dust in clouds, and glad indeed were the men to wash the sand from their mouths in the stream which, in spite of the heat, ran bubbling by.

No want of water here—the hottest summer would still spare it to them, and the quivering sky could not draw it into its embrace. Around the level ground ditches were dug to lead the treasured

moisture, and across some waste the hollow trees were laid to carry the water on to the other side; all was in readiness for the spring.

The summer rains would soon be upon them, and woe to the tribe that had no other covering but the branches torn from the trees.

The trees and grass began to look dry and parched; the soil was hot to the touch, and the children of the tribe could only play where the water running by would cool their feet.

Great fun had the boys with horned toads, which they caught while hiding upon the sand, their skin the color of the soil they half-buried themselves in. Or chased the green lizard, as, standing on its toes, it sought to climb the rocks around.

Some watched the women who found a clay so velvety soft that they decided to make their pottery from it, and laughed with glee as they paddled the clay until

it grew thick and tenacious. This, the women made into *ojahs* to carry water or made small dishes in which to cook their food.

Some they painted with red lead carried many miles, drawing black strokes or red stripes as it took their eye, but mostly the round circle, the image of the sun. These they baked over slow heating fires, after drying many days in the hot summer sun. Happy was the tribe in preparing for their wants, and only Wisdom was sad; for had not he lost his manhood's strength? and though still the head of the tribe, he could no more lead them to hunt. Thundercloud now gave the word of command, and only sought the chief for his advice upon any grave issue.

Loth was Gazelle to leave her father to play with the girls. Yet even she must play sometimes, though sad when her father felt his loss.

He often spoke of Thundercloud to

her, and wished that she would take him for her husband. But Gazelle cared less than ever for the stern chief, even though his bravery had saved her father's life.

And Thundercloud—he loved her still, though he said naught. “The old man will soon die,” he thought to himself, “and then who will gainsay me? My will shall be law, and what I wish, it shall be done.”

CHAPTER III.

THE valuables of the tribe had all been moved into the castle, and everything was in readiness for the families to take up their quarters in the several rooms. There they would be safe from the marauding animals and the fear of any savage enemy when night's dark mantle covered the open grounds. Here also they would be safe from the summer storms, which came with such downpours that the heavens seemed opened, for some falling stream to pass through; these would surely come as the time rolled on.

The girls, seeking some amusement, had decided to make a short trip into the mountains, for the scouts had said that no signs of savage tribes had been dis-

covered for miles around. Hence, accompanied by several of the elder women and boys, they started on their trip to gather acorns, piñon nuts, and mesquite bean, collecting heaps of firewood with which to load themselves on their return. Gazelle, as usual, was the leader in this frolic of the women, and she, Sunray, and several others, had reached a tall hill some distance in advance of the others. Here they sat upon the rough granite rocks to rest themselves, after their hilarious rush to the top. Sunray, as usual, was the first to speak, for difficult it was for her to remain silent any length of time.

“Look at that tall blackened tree which the lightning has torn asunder. Do you know that it reminds me of the Chief Wisdom, since he was torn by the savage cougar? So silent has he become that many wonder if he lives at all.

“But Thundercloud, how different!

His whole form seems to have grown and dilated, and his stern face has become brightened; his energy is terrific, and the men follow him as though led by a god. Ah! he is a man indeed; I would that I could find favor in his sight, for surely it would be heaven to toil for him."

With flashing eyes Gazelle sprung to her feet: "How dare you speak thus of my dear father? None can compare to him, and none can lead as he. Did he not bring you across the distant desert to this haven of rest, from the savage tribes? And has he not fought the wild animals singly and alone? Hast thou forgotten so soon the prowess of my father? and so quickly placed thyself under the leadership of another, and that the sub-chief? I hate his malignant eye, his compressed lips, and frowning forehead. I would I could never see him again. My father! Oh, my father!"— and she threw herself prone upon the

ground—"would that you had died from the claws of the cougar."

"Wisdom is a great chief," quotes another maiden. "Few there are that can compare with him. But he is now unable to lead the braves and huntsmen, or help the workers lay out the ditches. The tribe must have a leader, and who better than Thundercloud? He is the pupil of Wisdom. The old must ever sink after reaching the highest point, but what would become of the tribe if none could follow in the footsteps of the old, and fill the place their death or decrepitude leaves vacant? Even the mighty giants of the forest at last wither and die, or, struck by lightning, sink and fall with sudden destruction. Thus the mighty Wisdom was struck while still working for the good of the tribe; and what could be better for a man than to be deposed upon reaching his pinnacle of fame?"

The sudden cry of one of the boys broke in upon this discussion, and they saw Laughter running with all his speed toward them. "What has the boy done now? If there is any trouble to get into, that boy will get into it. Whatever is the matter with him?"

"Gazelle! Gazelle!" he called—"come quickly; come quickly, and see what I have found." They then all ran toward Laughter, who, leading them to a place where huge bowlders were piled one upon the other, climbed one layer, then the rest. They looked over and a sight was seen which made their blood creep and hair stand on end. The day was exceedingly hot, such a day as is often found in midsummer in the desert country, and the sun red and apoplectic, as if with its own heat. Not a cloud was to be seen anywhere, and the mountains and hills seemed to dance and quiver as if with a desire to escape the burning rays of the

sun above them. All nature was gasping, and hot-blooded animals had sought the shade of the dense brush, or, thirsting for water, departed for some hidden stream. The reptiles alone were joyful at the excessive heat, and lizards, snakes, and other poisonous creatures had left their hidden haunts to bask or revel in the sun.

Below the cliff, on which the maidens stood a sandy spot stretched away from the foot. The crystals of quartz and mica glittered until the eye was dazzled, while stretched and coiled upon it dozens of rattlesnakes in every conceivable position and of every conceivable length and size, were seen. One monster, whose length must have been quite six feet, seemed watching with intense gaze a bush close by. Full sixteen rattles were attached to its tail, and beside its immense size the rest of the snakes seemed small and puny as they crawled

around. Not a movement was seen excepting a vibrating as it were of the head. Presently a dove dropped from a branch upon the ground and slowly, with fluttering wings and fluffed-out feathers, approached, dazed and fascinated with ever nearing hops. Its mate was cooing in a distant tree, but the poor dove took no heed of the calls, and forgetful of all but the intense gaze of the serpent's eyes, drew nearer and nearer its death-dealing enemy. So near it came that the reptile could easily strike the sitting bird. Suddenly the snake threw its body into coil upon coil, its tail standing up from the center, and rattling a loud requiem. It seized with one spring the suddenly awakened dove, and before its wings could bear it hence, its life blood was staining the snow-white sand. This seemed to stir the nest of snakes to savagery, and the hissing and rattling became loud and terrifying. Some

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sprang toward the monster snake, who, seizing the dove, strove to swallow the bird intact, but in doing so one small snake had seized a leg. Slowly the bird slipped down the capacious maw, swelling the skin as it passed along. The small snake had struck its teeth deeply into the leg, and, unable to withdraw them, was squirming and twisting, endeavoring to escape the fate which too late it now perceived. A short time, with tail twisted round a rock nearby, it held against the stronger snake; but soon it continued to move onward toward its living grave; and ere long the twisting tail alone rattled from the mouth of the hideous serpent, which, growing torpid, laid with bulging sides asleep upon the sand. The din became quiet, and the remaining snakes grew dormant and restful.

“Ugh!” said Sunray, “the beastly reptiles, enough serpents lie there to supply

my father with snakes more than sufficient for the yearly snake dance. We shall lead him here and he will call down blessings upon us for our having found them."

The girls, tired with their long watch, drew back; when hearing a cry from the elder women they ran toward them. The women seemed to be excited, and spoke in quick and angry tones. "Where have you been this long time? We must wend our way homeward, for we fear very much that a terrible storm is brewing and it would not be well to be caught upon these hills."

Tired and languid from the heat it was a quiet company that commenced its homeward journey, very different from the laughter and sport of the start from camp.

A feeling of impending danger appeared to hang over all. In the distance dense blue-black clouds seemed to have

sprung from the hilltops, and ever and anon, the glare of lightning with the deep rumble of thunder fell upon their ears.

"I am afraid a cloud will burst upon us, we must hurry," said one of the elder women, "for it would be terrible indeed to be caught so far from home."

The women, with panting breath, struggled through the mesquite, or climbed over huge rocks which were in their way, scaring the rattlesnake or monster from its lair, yet heedless of them. The children began to whimper, and the women's hurrying steps became more slow on their account. Yet still they anxiously scanned the sky, which became blacker and blacker, with dense, hurrying clouds.

The buzzing of wasps, or tarantula hawk, seemed to be the only sound, unless some bird scared by their approach, rushed twittering from a bush.

"We shall certainly be caught," said one woman as a vivid flash, succeeded by a peal of thunder which seemed to come from the clouds above their heads, was followed by a pattering of large round drops of rain; "and we are yet some way from camp. Hurry, children; run girls; I would the men were near."

Faster now the rain poured upon them, and quicker in succession the lightning flashed around. The wind seemed suddenly to awake, and blew the rain in sheets against their faces, until their breath left them, and they turned perforce to seek some sheltered nook.

Some overhanging rocks were near, and 'neath their shelter they crouched, covering the children as well as they could from the pouring rain.

A flash of lightning blinded their eyes, followed by a clap of thunder, which sounded as though the mountains had fallen 'neath the stroke, and a cracking,

splitting sound, as a huge monarch of the hills was split asunder, its branches falling in chaos amid loud snaps to the ground.

Gazelle shuddered as she thought of what the maiden had said concerning her father, and the tears poured from her eyes until they grew red and swollen.

The women trembled with fear, for each succeeding flash might mean the death of all.

The water poured in streams to the gulch below, and soon a dull roar told them that their further progress was stayed toward the castle. For none could cross the yellow foaming waters, down which huge bowlders coursed, and fallen trunks swept by as though imbued with life.

For hours the rain poured down, while the lighting flashed and the thunder roared, until all nature seemed at war.

The women dared not leave their temporary shelter, though the daylight slowly waned. The children began to cry from cold and hunger, and the women had some difficulty in hushing them.

The rain had now stopped, but they dared not leave their shelter, when suddenly a distant whoop was heard, and a sound of scrambling steps upon the mountain side. The women called aloud, and joyful were they indeed when Thundercloud, leading a number of men, found them beneath the hanging rocks.

"What do you mean?" said Thundercloud as he turned toward one of the older women. "Do you not know the signs of the storm yet, that you should lead this company so far afield? You should know better."

He spoke as though fear and terror had carried him away.

He had hurried the men away on hear-

ing that the women were caught in the storm, and though held back by the rushing waters, by means of much climbing and great danger they had crossed the water-filled gulches. They all waited some time for the water to flow away (for in these regions the floods disperse as quickly as they fill the gulches) and then they led the shivering company by devious ways to the castle. Happy indeed were the tribe at their escape, and happier still were the lost ones as they climbed wet and dripping into the warm covering of the castle. Here they soon recovered their lost gayety, and joked and laughed over their scare of the mountains, telling how Sunshine had quaked and hidden her head with each succeeding flash; how Gazelle had wept enough to fill the streams with tears; how Mother Willow had scolded long and loud, and Laughter bravely told them all that he would save them, never fear,

though all the evil spirits were collected round their shelter.

Wisdom welcomed his daughter with joy, and thanked Thundercloud again and again for having returned him his Gazelle. But Gazelle seemed quiet and shy, and though Thundercloud hungered for a glance from her, received only a calm "Thank you, Thundercloud. Our tribe would perish but for your skill and care." This was all, but in her breast their raged a wild longing to drive him from her and to raise her father to the pedestal he had usurped.

The women welcomed Thundercloud with shrill cries and smiles of joy, for would not any of the maidens have given their hair to be his wife? Yet he looked at them with a smile which seemed to bid them go no further, as he inquired if any had been affected by the cold or the wetting. He returned to the bachelors' quarters and strove to drown his

thoughts of Gazelle with the quips and jokes of the young men, but in vain.

"Gazelle, why will you not care for Thundercloud?" asked Wisdom. "You see how he loves you, and yet you treat him as if he were naught. Surely he is one that any woman should be proud to love. I myself love him as a father would his son. I feel, Gazelle, as if this world would soon pass from me, and then who will guard my daughter?"

"Of course if you were treated as other women, Thundercloud's offer of his wealth to me would have been accepted; but I dislike this trading of one's loved ones for barter, and wish my daughter to be happy with the man she weds. Therefore have I not compelled you to marry him, though all the men tell me that I should give you to Thundercloud."

Gazelle gazed at her father as if struck by the fierce lightning. Then came hissing between the teeth: "What! marry

Thundercloud! never! Though he were the only man that lived upon this earth; though rich with everything this earth contains, yet would I not wed him. I hate him, with his proud, commanding ways, his look as if he always ruled the tribe."

"Hush, child! You know not what you say. How can I, with these shriveled limbs, lead them to the hunt or battle? It is well that so brave a man can take my place when I die."

"Ah! father, do not talk of death; for many, many moons thou shalt remain to give me joy. What should I do without you? I would seek the rocky hills and perish if you died."

"Well, well, child! I'll speak no more, for more like your mother you grow each day. She loved me dearly, and would have died before marrying a man of her tribe, after giving her love to me. Perchance some stranger has taken posses-

sion of your soul? 'Tis as I thought; else why that blush and drooping head? Who is the stranger? I would I saw him ere the earth receive my body."

"Ah! father, thou art dearer to me than any man, and if only thou wouldst not speak of Thundercloud, how happy I should be."

"Well, child, if needs be that it should be, I shall be silent."

Little slept Gazelle that night, though safe from storms and danger in the castle. She missed the canopy of the starlit heavens and the cool breeze murmuring through the rustling leaves; the gurgling of the water as it carried strength to the vegetation and life to thousands of living creatures. The crackle of the fires and glow of the many scattered round.

It seemed to her as if her freedom had departed from her, and so long had she slept, breathing the night air rich in

ozone, that the air seemed stifling in the rooms of the castle. But well she knew the danger of sleeping on the rain-moistened ground, and the roaring of the stream told her that at any time it might wash the banks, and sweep everything before it.

She rose from her couch and seeking the ramparts, was soon leaning on the wall, and gazing o'er the depths beneath. How far it seemed to where the trees were waving before the wind, yet not a breath struck her, sheltered by the walls of the cave.

She turned and looked behind her, marking the heaps of bowlders ready for any attacking force placed there, though all the plastering had not been finished. Thundercloud would not be caught napping by any hidden enemy.

She could not but admire his forethought and his care, but why should he take her father's place?

What was that! only the coyotes fighting over the bones left by the tribe, those cowardly scavengers which crept from their lairs when darkness approached and fled from danger however slight.

The roar of a mountain lion scared the other animals, and all again was quiet. An owl with noiseless flight passed her by, and sitting on a jutting rock, hooted a mournful note that set her thinking of the stranger far away.

And yet she somehow felt that he was coming nearer every day. A feeling in her breast seemed to say: "He is coming! he is coming! and all will be well."

Did that not seem like a fire far, far away upon the hills across the desert plain? It was kindled by some wandering Indian, perhaps, camped beneath a tree, ready to set out across the plain when day broke.

She turned and started as she heard

some movement close beside her, for there stood Thundercloud leaning on the ramparts. He also had been unable to sleep, and sought the night air on the rooftop. She drew his attention to the distant fire.

"Yes," he said, "some wandering trader carrying his merchandise to the distant tribes. He will perchance call here to show his wares, but not for some time, for he is far away.

"Ah! Gazelle, all the riches he may carry shall be yours, if only you will be mine. My love for you can never die, and my strength is leaving my limbs with the weary longing for the love you will not give me. Even now I could not sleep, and sought these ramparts to think of thee, far above the waving trees. Thy father loves me, and would give thee to me."

"It cannot be, Thundercloud, by the great Sun, the God of Light, it cannot be.

Many are the maidens of this tribe who would love the chief. Why not take one of them in marriage? As for me I cannot leave my father."

"By the gods, some other man has stolen thee from me," said the chief. "He shall never wed thee, Gazelle, never; for sooner would I see thee dead before me than the wife of another."

He drew himself to his full height, and with one fierce glance turned to seek the lower rooms.

Gazelle bowed her head upon her arms, and with aching brow thought of the fury of the great sub-chief. Then slowly rising she sought her father's room below.

CHAPTER IV.

BEAUTIFUL seemed the hills and vales, the morning after the storm. The dusty leaves, all dull and gray, were green and cleansed by the sudden downpour. The rocks upon the cliffs appeared of a darker and cooler shade, and the dry soil, moistened, no longer flew in dense clouds of dust driven by the wind over the country.

All nature had awakened, filling the air with sound. The bevy of countless insects darting from tree to tree, and flower to flower; the twittering of the bluebird, the camp robber, or the red-bird, and the mimicking notes of the mocking bird, together combined in filling the woods with music; and the hills with harmony. Already the lizards were

darting from root to root, while on the rising ground the road runner pursued the rattlesnake with tricks and wiles. Here one with energy was collecting pieces of the jumping cactus to spread around a hapless snake caught sleeping far from home. Awaking, soon full well it knew its fate, for as it struck against the cactus points it turned another way only to meet the opposing cactus spread around, until in black despair it turned upon its coiled-up tail to bury deep the poisonous fangs and die the death of a suicide.

In the distance could be seen some deer browsing upon the leaves of the oak brush, heedless of a huntsman crawling ever nearer, and nearer still, the unsuspecting animals.

Far up in the heavens the buzzard soared, gliding with outstretched wings, or with scarce any movement, peering upon the ground for some dead animal,

whose life had been driven from it by the rushing waters.

Nearer the castle the hawks watched closely each tree and brush for some luckless bird, or rushed upon the nest of the cooing doves, and tearing the young birds from their downy shelter, flew swiftly with the prey to feed its young.

The tarantula hawk on buzzing wing sought out some spider's hole built with care to catch the fallen prey, and harring with piercing sting injected its lethal dose, carried the limp sleeping insect to its nest all built of clay, there to await the larva's gnawing teeth.

The busy ants were carrying every seed the wind blew round their nests, until a bare ring of stony ground showed you nothing there might grow; and in the rocks the busy bee stored rich honey gathered from flowers both far and near. But woe to that hive if some prowling

bear should find the entrance to their hidden store.

Afar the woodpecker was tapping, tapping, on some tall dead tree, pecking out a hole in which to hide the acorn nut, and here some hapless larva placed by unsuspecting mother soon would hatch and make a meal for the waiting bird when winter days grew cold.

The bubbling stream no longer purred and sung, but filled with water to its highest brim rushed and roared in a yellow, frothy current, while ever and anon some hanging bank, undermined by the waters, fell crashing into the river's bed, and passed away to soon lie cast upon the level places lower down. Thus nature seemed all uselessly to ever build, only later ruthlessly to destroy the structure so slowly raised and therewith in some other place attempt to build a better form to again hurl destruction upon it. And yet perfection seemed no nearer

being formed. The people left their different rooms to climb down the narrow way, and in straggling groups betook them to the camping-ground, there to light the fires preparatory to cooking their morning meal. Some stood upon the banks of the stream and watched huge trunks rushing by, carried from some distant hill by the sudden rain.

They noticed how their fields were not affected by the flood, and that the banks retained the waters though risen so high. They had closed the mouth of the ditch, and thus no water entered to carry ruin to the labor of weeks.

Their morning meal finished, they all retired to their several duties, while those more lazy than the rest squatted beside the fires and talked of other storms they had seen long ago, and told how an attacking tribe of hostiles had waited days for the falling water, unable to reach the castle of hills, their former

home, until tired and weary they had taken themselves away to the distant mountains from which they came.

“‘Tis many days,” remarked one man, “since the stranger left our late home, and he had promised to return and seek us by the signs we left in our new home. He seemed to be rich in this world’s goods, and had much to barter for the pottery and baskets of the women and the skins of the men. He gave our women much praise for their skill in forming the *ojahs* and dishes as well as the rich coloring which they drew upon the sides and edges. I fear our women will need the colored earths ere long, if soon the trader does not find our camp.

“Well, Arrow! whither are you going with such haste?”

“Thundercloud saw in the distant mountains quite two days’ journey from here a blazing fire last night. He thinks that it must be the stranger from the south,

who visited us in our old home so many moons ago, and promised to follow the signs we told him of to our new dwelling-place. He has sent me to seek this spot and if it be the trader who is camped there to lead him to the castle. For the women have woven many baskets, and made much pottery. Our store of skins has grown (for many are the animals in this untraveled spot), and he feign would barter with him for what is needed by the tribe."

"May thy speed be great, good Arrow, for we would know the news, and what is happening among the tribes."

The men were twisting and turning as they spoke flakes of flint until they could hold them evenly along the base of the thumb by the other fingers. Then with a heavier piece they chipped here and chipped there, wherever a tiny point projected from the edge they wished. Much time was consumed in this, and

great the skill which constant working gave, for soon they had an arrow-point with cutting edge, and roughened base in order to bind it to the willow stick with tendons moistened ere applied. Or else they made a knife with which to skin the wild beasts slain. Others sitting by had brought a rounded stone from the stream, and rubbing forward and backward many hours upon a granite boulder by dint of patience and great care a cutting edge was made, while round the head a dent was rasped to keep the cord from slipping that bound it to the handle; in this way an ax was formed; or else a longer stone was made into a hammer for fighting hand to hand. Close by another man had laid a deer skin dried and hard flat upon the ground, and with a flint kept cutting at the hair until it disappeared. Then with rough stones he rubbed the inside fat the sun had left, so that it quickly grew quite smooth.

Afterward the skins were rubbed between the hands for hours, and often days until it turned as white and pliable as the skin must be in order to make a coat, or moccasins for the feet, whenever the women had time.

These they sewed with needles made from the leg bones of a deer, drawing the tendons through and through.

Their tools were few, their wants were not so great, for happy indeed were they if food was plenty, and the good sun poured its heating rays upon the earth.

They learned that many things could be obtained from the wild beasts they slew. The rocks around produced full many more, while the trees and earth would give them numerous others. And little recked they of the world at large, if but the children grew up strong, and sickness kept away. They knew the tribe of a surety would help every member, and every member strove to help the

tribe in their small way. Combining thus to fight the common enemy.

A little farther off the women drew together.

Two or three more expert than the rest were molding from a lump of clay a rounded *ojah*, building up with patient care the strips of clay to form the bending walls, and gently rubbing smooth the outside of the utensil with a polished shell. These were left alone in some hot sunny place to dry, but often all their work was vain, for deep cracks would show in some, and some would fall asunder.

Then came the artists with their colored paints. First covering all with snow white kaolin, they dipped their rabbit-hair brushes in the paint, rubbed well and smooth within the mortars by the straight stone pestle. Then they drew lines in blue and red and black made from cinnabar and other earths, ob-

tained from distant parts by the lone trader. On some the private mark of wealthier chiefs was made, or their short history traced by signs upon the vessel's face. Much more they charged for these, and longer took they to perfect their work.

Then with great care small lumps of mescal fiber were built around, and as it slowly burned it made an intense heat for many hours. With greater care they drew the slowly cooling clay from out the embers, only to find perhaps that the article had cracked; but if the piece was sound their joy was great. For many, many plates were cast upon the ground, and scattered round the place. The many broken pieces showed the numbers destroyed in order to obtain the few that were sound and good.

The women talked together as they worked, discussing all the happenings of the tribe, and as they wove the willow

split into thin strips, called to their helpers to hurry with the colored pieces, dyed in the fluid in which many berries growing on the mountains near had long been boiled.

At last an elderly woman sitting near remarked to Willow, who was weaving fast. (She it was who in the great storm had scolded all both far and near, and well her tongue could wag whenever some woman drew upon her devoted head her wrath and anger.)

"Hast noticed, Willow, how the daughter of the chief has changed? No more she laughs and dances with the girls. Her face grows thin, and ever stays she tending on her father."

"Poor Wisdom! gone has all his strength, and she, poor girl, must feel it more than he," replied Willow.

"Yes," said the woman, "she seems to think that Thundercloud should never rule, and turns away whenever he draws

near. Were I her father, different it would be. And Thundercloud should have the wife that any one can see he craves for night and day, though why he should I cannot see."

"The spirits take you," Willow said. "Wouldst make the girl toil for the sub-chief whom she loathes? Dost thou not know that when the stranger trader arrives here from the south her eyes as bright will grow as the stars that shine above? An owl, thou art, that sits at night and hoots and brings forebodings to the heart grown sad. Go, bring me willows from the river's bed, and sit not talking of things thy little brain can never know."

"Good gracious, Willow, why this rage? I only said what all the women say, and why the stranger should by her be loved when Thundercloud is nigh is quite beyond me."

"Go get me willows, foolish one. Will

you not go before I rise? Of course you cannot understand. How can such brains as you possess perceive the smallest thing?"

The woman rose and slowly walked away. Gazelle, poor girl, when such as yon old hag can talk of you in that bold way your father's power must truly all have gone.

"Ah! Dancing-feet, if my small help can bring your daughter joy it shall be given, for well I know your love for me was great."

She gazed along the stream then muttered as she looked: "For willows now I wait. See how those women talk. Did my tongue wag as theirs, my work would never end, and longer would it take to weave a basket round than the men take to chip an arrow's point.

"Sad must be Gazelle when the elder women note her downcast gaze. I must go to her and give her cheering words, poor child."

She put aside the basket still unfinished and rose from her seat upon the ground. Then strolled with lingering step from one group of busy workers to another. The loquacious women laughed and joked as they ground the mesquite bean or the grass seed into flour upon the *matatas* which were still almost flat, for time it took to hollow out the curve upon the long black stones, and more careful must they be to keep the flour from spilling, which frequently it did, or crushed the wild walnuts gathered 'neath the trees to make a luscious tea.

Among them as she strolled, old Willow stopped and talked. At last she saw Sunray sitting near her mother, and helping her bore a round hole, with a sharpened bone, through some small ornament. "Have you seen Gazelle?" she quickly said, for well she knew that they often were together.

"Scarce have I seen her since this

morning. She mopes alone and will not join the girls in play. I hate a girl to move about as she. If she no longer cares to play, she should marry some one, or else she will grow so old the men will pass her by and have no love for her. Ah! there she is, sitting beneath that giant cactus which raises its round head so far above her," said Willow as she looked around. "I must go to her."

With slow and weary steps she approached the girl and gently touching her upon her shoulder, for her head was buried in her hand, she gently said: "Why so sad, Gazelle? I have sought for you the whole tribe over, and at last find you crouching like a wounded jack-rabbit suffering pain.

She raised her head, and looking wistfully in the elder woman's face, said: "Ah, Willow, I have often heard you say you loved my mother, who has been taken from us, to leave me lone indeed.

None have I to whom my inmost thoughts could be displayed. Will you be my friend to whom I can confide? Be to me, Willow, as my mother dear."

"Poor! poor, Gazelle, the Willow cried and clasped her in her arms. "If thus you feel pour out your troubles, and I will give you words such as your mother would with all her love."

The tears ran coursing each other down her cheeks as she thought of the lonely child longing for some one in whom she might confide, yet finding none who wished to hear.

"My father, Willow, wishes me to marry Thundercloud, the tribe's brave chief; but I—I love him not. Of course he could compel me to it, but does not wish to force me to the chief's strong arms. I feel as though his stern eyes would wither up my mind, and soon a raving idiot I should become."

"Besides—speak on, my child, I know

what you would say," broke in Willow. With many blushes she told her how she loved the stranger who so many moons ago had wandered to their castle. "Ah, he is brave and handsome, and his dark eyes are like the stars of heaven; and swift as the antelope he travels on the land. My father brought my mother from the south, and it seems to me as if my heart would turn toward the south to find a mate.

"Thus ever is the soul," mused Willow. "Whatever seems beyond and difficult to obtain that is what it longs for day and night, while nearer and much better things are cast aside."

"Ah, well, Gazelle, soon I think the stranger will be here, for Thundercloud sent a runner out to seek a fire seen last night. He thinks the trader is camping there and waits the streams to fall before attempting to seek the signs, which must be washed away by the great rains."

Gazelle's eyes dilated and her breath came quickly. "Oh, would it were. Only last night upon the ramparts I saw the fire in the distance, and even then it seemed to me the stranger called me to him. It must be he, for who else would follow from the south?"

Her tears were gone, a smile again was on her lips, and rising from her seat she danced around Willow till the elder woman said in gentle tones: "Gazelle, you are beside yourself; has the stranger said he loved you?"

"Why, no," with widening eyes she replied: "Why should he? Did I not see his gaze upon me as he talked with my father to sell his wares? Hardly had we seen each other when the love light filled them, and his tones were soft whenever he spoke to me, while I felt as if he only had to speak the word to follow him, even if to the other side of the world."

The young are ever thus; one moment filled with joy, another and the darkest sorrow seems to be their lot, again it's all forgotten. Gazelle skipped beside the slower steps of the elder woman, and all her old joyous manner returned to her.

No doubt was in her mind, the stranger was returning to make her his loving bride. And Willow had not the heart to throw any damper upon her exuberance, as she plucked the wild flower, whose many blooms made a beautiful bunch of color, or picked up some richly marked stones that caught her eye.

"Come, Willow, and eat with my father. I will cook you such a meal that your mouth will water when you think of it again. Thundercloud brought me honey found in some hollow cave, and luscious is its taste; locusts are there in plenty roasted over the fire with nuts collected from the many trees; ah, we shall have a feast fit for any one."

CHAPTER V.

BUT what of the stranger—the trader from the south? Let us retrace our steps to the time of the meeting in the castle of hills. Antelope, for that was the man's name, had come upon the castle of hills many moons before, in the course of his wandering from tribe to tribe, and had stopped several days to show his wares to the chief. Much struck had he been with Chief Wisdom, whose fair dealing and upright manner had won upon him. He had noted with surprise the beautiful daughter, and could scarce keep his eyes from wandering to her face, even when in the midst of some close bargaining, and dearly loved Antelope a good bargain. Chief Wisdom had informed him that they in-

tended to leave the castle shortly, for the savage Indians had fallen upon them so frequently that they were often in want of the necessary food, and though victorious in the many fights, they lost more than they ever gained.

"We shall travel north," said Wisdom, "for I have heard of rich lands and verdant valleys in which no one dwells. I shall leave signs as we travel, so that you at some future date may follow the tribe. We will have goods to barter, and will need earths and flints by that time. We will at the bend of the river place three stones pointing whither we go, and wherever there may be running water, near there I shall place three stones standing one on the other."

The dark Chief Thundercloud had stood by during the conversation, and had seconded his chief in requesting the trader to follow. Antelope had turned, and having seen the chief's daughter,

Gazelle, watching him with tender gaze, had thereupon promised to return at some future date.

The next day his bearers had shouldered their burdens, and he had started to return to his own pueblo, for he had sold all his jewels, etc., and was taking away the baskets and pottery made by the women, which was certainly of a very superior make. Six moons he traveled, sleeping by day and traveling by night across the desert lands until he had reached his home in safety. There he had remained some time, recruiting after his journey and getting ready for a further trip north.

“Why do you risk another journey, Antelope? Riches you have in plenty. Why do you not marry and settle down, my son?”

“Mother, dear, I must make one more journey, and perchance I shall bring you

a daughter, whose beauty will be pleasing to your sight."

"Not one of the savage women, Antelope, surely? Sooner would I see you dead than married to one of them."

"No, mother; she is the daughter of a chief of cliff dwellers, from whom you know we have descended, and though poorer than we are, still have they much of the skill that we possess, though not in all things so proficient. Dreadful are the dangers that they encounter while cultivating their fields, and only in the cliffs could they find safety from the savage tribes who ever and anon sweep down upon them, destroying their ditches, and burning the corn so carefully raised. We have dangers enough, but nothing to compare to those endured by these tribes."

"Yes, several of the women of our pueblo have married cliff dwellers, and traveled hence with their husbands, never

more to return," remarked the mother. "I well remember one beautiful girl who left her home with a handsome chief, whose name I cannot now remember. Dancing-feet was her name. And many were the men who sought her in marriage, but she would have none of them. Hand in hand with this tall chief she left the pueblo, and soon she was forgotten by the people, for we never heard of her more. And only your conversation now brought her to my mind. Well, boy, a mother will scarcely think that any woman is good enough for her son, but none would attract your attention unless fair to look upon; that I know."

Antelope busied himself in collecting various articles with which to barter for the goods of the various people he would come across—arrow-heads, beautiful in shape and color, pink, white, black, and other colors; colored earths, cinnabar, red ocher and the blue of copper stone.

Jewels such as the turquoise, fossil shells and many colored crystals rarely seen; abalone shells from some distant sea, beads made by distant tribes of copper, and many other things too numerous to mention.

At last one morning six men left the quiet pueblo to journey by devious trails far to the north. Many deserts must they cross and tall mountains climb ere they reached the place from whence they would return. Adobe, his friend and boyhood playmate, accompanied him, together with four bearers to carry the barter provisions and water; for few the places where water could be obtained, and great was the heat of the parched and sandy deserts they would cross. Antelope knew all the springs for many miles north; but beyond the castle of hills the country was unknown to him. The season was somewhat hot for this journey, but something impelled him to

set out at once, and therefore he would go. Armed with his trusty bow and arrows and a heavy stone ax he led his little company forth, and silently they followed the narrow trail which grew less distinct as they journeyed on.

They reached one night a clear spring over which tall cottonwoods hung their grateful shade and the tired men flung themselves down to quench their thirst, for no drink had they since noon, and the burning sun had drawn great moisture from their skins.

"We must rest the midday hours," said Adobe, "for too much water do we need when traveling in the heat."

They ate of the parched corn which they carried with them and the jerked deer which was cut in long strips, and rolling themselves in their skins they laid around the fire. They had that day left the castle of hills—beyond which was unknown country, for searching at

the bend of the creek they found the three stones which pointed in a straight line to a distant peak. It had taken them some time to do so, for hidden were they lest savage tribes should follow. They had started late from the directing stones, had crossed a small desert ere reaching some hills and found the needful water, for their gourds had not contained enough to quench their thirst, and they felt the want greatly.

"Antelope, this heat is dreadful," remarked Adobe; "I would we had not left until the cooler weather came, for then we could cross this country with ease; but now I fear the springs and tanks will all be dry, and dreadful would it be to reach a drinking-place only to find the water gone."

"It would be dreadful," replied the trader, "and many are the bones of wanderers caught upon these desert lands without refreshing drink to be found

scattered over them, but I have crossed them many times before, and still am living."

"Yes, but this season is drier than it should be and I fear the seeking of water only to find it dried and gone."

"Well, Adobe, we will fill the gourds with water and rest during the midday heat, we then can travel far until we come to some clear spring."

Early they rose the next morning and having eaten their scanty meal they filled the gourds with care, for well they knew it might be long before they drank again, and started on their journey across the desert they saw before them. They slowly descended the hills covered with cacti of every description. Here and there the giant cactus spread its gaunt arms as if to stay their progress, but slowly they descended until the ground became quite level.

The grease wood grew in profusion, but

no living thing seemed to move around unless it were some reptile lying 'neath the shade or jack rabbit bounding in the distance. Here and there where some cloud had burst, a wash was worn across their way, but otherwise the ground was as level as a board. Many miles they walked; hotter and hotter the sun grew as the hours rolled on. At last, exhausted, they laid beneath an iron-wood tree and moistened their lips with the precious water. The bearers would have taken more, but Antelope watched them closely, for water now meant life itself.

The clear blue sky seemed an immense canopy with the round sun glaring down upon them from the center, while shrubs and still more shrubs, a level sea of gray, grew all around them.

In the distance a blue range of mountains seemed far, far away; behind them the hills they had crossed were sunk below the horizon.

No water would they find upon this desert, and little of the precious moisture had they with them. One of the bearers put the gourd to his lips and drank huge gulps of it. Antelope was wrath and would have killed him in his rage, for the heat had made him lose his equable temper, had not Adobe restrained his anger. Again they started on their way with pebbles in their mouths, which were constantly twisted and turned beneath the tongue, and slowly with staggering steps they continued their journey.

Their lips were dry, and their tongues began to swell; the bearer who had drunk from the gourd seemed worse than the rest, although he had obtained more water than the others. Antelope carefully divided the remaining drops, which were barely enough to moisten the tongue, and each began to think his last hour had come. Adobe had been closely

inspecting each cactus as he traveled along, when suddenly he gave a cry of delight, for in the distance was a rounded "nigger's head," a cactus which, having been split open, would exude a pellucid water. They hurriedly with their stone axes cut off the guardian spikes, and soon they were chewing the stringy pulp which softened their parched lips and gave them some encouragement.

Presently one of the bearers found three stones piled up—the sign of water being near. Their joy was great; but after much searching around a hollow in the ground was found which now contained no water. Then black despair filled all their breasts, for help was far away, yet still they struggled on.

The sun, the color of blood, was sinking behind the hills, so they laid themselves upon the sand, calling upon their gods for help in their trouble. They ate nothing that night, for none were

able to swallow the parched corn. In the early hours of the morning before the sun had risen each rose unrested and continued on their way. Soon the round orb rose, blood red in color, from the horizon. The heat was still more intense, yet still they endeavored to struggle on. The mountains in the distance seemed to grow bigger; yet were so far, far away that they began to lose all hope of ever reaching them. Some of the bearers' tongues again began to swell and all were unable to talk; their eyes grew bloodshot and one or two began to cast away their burdens.

"Shall we perish in the desert?" Adobe said to Antelope. "Why did I ever come with you so far from home?"

Antelope replied not a word, but strained every energy to keep the men together; all in vain. At last one of them fell beneath a mesquite bush and refused to rise again. They left him

panting and gasping for breath, lying upon the ground. The others still struggled on, for well they knew their fate if they waited to help their fallen comrade on. As they struggled along they heard behind them a loud whoop, and turning, saw their fallen comrade, his clothes thrown from him, tearing wildly across the country, his tongue protruding, his skin torn by the cruel cacti. In madness he would thus run until, exhausted, he fell prone upon the ground. Then death having overtaken him, he would soon make a feast for the watching buzzard.

The burdens were all thrown upon the ground, each one intent upon reaching water, when one of the men found some prickly pears; the thorns were quickly burned which guarded their juicy interior and the acid fluid restored them somewhat. But soon another bearer had

fallen by the way and help seemed farther than ever away from them.

Their strength had almost left them, when suddenly Antelope gave a cry; "Look! look!" he yelled, and in the distance they saw a placid lake. Tall reeds were growing on the brink of it, and on its bosom floated duck, geese and other game. They quickened their steps, intent on reaching the delicious water, but ever as they progressed the farther seemed it from them and when at last they had almost reached its banks it faded into desert land. One more bearer sunk to the ground on finding that the lake was only a delusion given to them by the gods, and they all prepared themselves to die.

But Antelope, Adobe, and the remaining bearers struggled ever on. They filled their hands with dirt pressing it with vigor within their palms, but no relief received they from it, though at

other times so good. Their strength began to fail and they had given themselves up for lost, when suddenly Antelope, sniffing at the wind, cried: "I smell water, I smell water to the right."

A few hills were now rising before them and several cañons could be seen extending into the mountain; which would they take? They turned up one which twisted toward the right, when, lo! a cottonwood tree was seen in the distance. With the frenzy of hope revived they dashed toward it, and, joy of joys, beneath its shade a tiny spring was found.

With strange, hoarse cries Antelope and Adobe, for the bearer was still some distance behind, threw themselves on the brink and drank, and drank, and drank. Yet still their bodies required more moisture, though their tongues began to soften, their brains grow clearer (for strange dreams kept floating through

their minds) till at last they leaned back refreshed and strengthened. Presently the bearer crawled up to them, and, reaching the water, buried his face deeply in the running stream.

How long they lay there they knew not, but soon they were refreshed and then Antelope remembered the other bearers dying on the desert. Nothing would induce the bearer to leave the life-saving spring. So he and Adobe filled their gourds and drinking once more ere leaving, retraced their steps to where the dying men lay.

Little time it took them to traverse the distance which had seemed impassable without water, and they found the two bearers still lying beneath a bush. Slowly they poured the water between their teeth, and soon the perishing men revived. Their eyes opened, and clutching the gourds, they drank deep and long of the life-giving fluid.

"Enough," said Antelope, "until you reach the spring," and seizing a bundle of food he and Adobe raised the bearers to their feet, and led them to the spring.

Sad was the party at the thought of the dead man on the plain, but tempered with the joy of their wondrous escape.

The trickling of the brook was a heavenly sound and often they rose to drink of the water—for frequently it seemed to them to be only a dream, and that soon they would awake to suffer the agony of their dreadful thirst.

They arose the next morning with renewed vigor and returned across the desert to regain their lost burdens, some of which they found. In the distance they saw the buzzards circling in the air and knew their lost companion laid stretched in death with tearing nails deep buried in the sand, for thus it ever was.

Near the spring they again found the

directing stones and traveled along a ridge which rose higher and higher above the desert. Numbers of the greenwood trees were on this ridge and the stony ground was covered with the jumping cactus, for if touched however slightly, the rounded ends would fall to the ground, and careful must they be in traveling, for their sharp points would pierce the skin too quickly, and difficult were they to withdraw.

Few were the animals to be seen. A fox, perhaps, with bushy tail scouting toward its lair with furtive backward glances they saw, but little else. Again they saw the three stones piled one upon the other and knew that somewhere near water should be found. They searched around, and in a tiny gulch found a spot where the water had collected in a hollow place, but little remained and that was thick and green with scum. Dragon flies darted around.

Thankful were they to find water at all; so they camped upon its brink and boiling the water in a gourd they had (this they did by heating a rounded stone and dropping it in the water until it boiled) then setting it aside the thickness fell to the bottom and they drank of the clear water above. Little they needed in the way of food, and strange it seemed to see these men journeying across the desert country with nothing beyond their parched corn to keep them alive, and yet they thought nothing of this, though many travelers died upon the desert lands for want of water.

CHAPTER VI.

SLOWLY they journeyed toward the Dead Bear Castle, seeking the signs left by the wandering tribesmen. Often they came upon their camping places, the signs of which were not yet destroyed. For Wisdom had camped in many suitable spots days at a time, thus resting the children and women who were not so strong, and in the meantime hunting for animals to sustain themselves with, as they traveled on.

Antelope often thought of the fair daughter of the chief, as they drew nearer and nearer the last stopping-place of the tribe, and Adobe wondered at the silence of his comrade, who no more joked as was his wont.

“What are these trails which cross and

recross the hills?" Adobe remarked one day. Antelope had been so buried in thought that he had not noticed them. But on his attention being drawn to them he started with terror.

"They are the trails of savage Indians; if they come upon us we are lost. We must travel with much more care, for I would not lead these wild tribes to the cliff dwellers, who have traveled so far to escape their depredations."

They had evidently struck a portion of the country which was traversed by these savages in their frequent searches for game, but as yet Antelope and his men had avoided them, and the hunters had not seen any of the signs of their progress, else they would have followed them ere this.

With much care they now endeavored to efface the traces they made on the sand, stepping only from rock to rock and frequently turning to see if every

branch had returned to its former position. Then when at night they sought some overhanging rock for shelter, they only built their fires of sticks, parched and dried in the heating rays of the sun, and quickly the embers were quenched with sand as soon as their meal was cooked, even though wild animals were prone to attack them when asleep with no fire near.

Frequently they saw, upon some distant peak, the smoke of a hostile fire signaling to the friends in the far distance. The signs were unknown to them and differed somewhat from those that they were accustomed to see. The wild men were evidently all around them, though none had crossed the trail which they had followed with so much caution. Beautiful were the many cacti which were blooming around them. Here was the wide expanding flower of the prickly pear, pink, red or lake color.

Some like stars studded the spiky domes from which they sprouted; others on flattened leaves extended their brilliant coloring. The soap plant, whose bayonet leaves surrounded a stalk covered with bells which sprouted from the center, was everywhere; while the tall mesquite reared its huge stalk heavenward to bloom with yellow flower and spread its perfume upon the rocky hills, a harvest of sweetness for the busy bees and insect life.

But the traders took no notice of their fragrance; for, filled with the fear of the hostile tribes, they only sought to hide all trace of their footsteps from any of the wandering hunters who might be near.

They had almost reached their destination, for Wisdom had described to Antelope the mountains in which they expected to find a hiding-place. But the heat was now becoming intense, and the

storms of summer were likely to burst upon them at any time.

Antelope was pointing out to Adobe the probable location of the cliff dwellers, for the last stones seen had pointed directly to a distant peak, where he noticed a heavy black cloud rising over the point of rocks at which he was gazing.

"Adobe, that must be a storm brewing," said Antelope, as he pointed to the heavy clouds. "I trust we shall reach cover before it bursts upon us, for every wash and creek will be filled to overflowing, and our passage will be delayed many days. I should hate to be caught in the bed of some creek winding between the lofty walls of basalt, which form a narrow passage for the pent-up waters to force its way below. Listen to the thunder as it roars; that must be a dreadful storm."

"Yes," said Adobe, "I wish we were out of this rocky country."

Their further progress was prevented by huge rocks. So they climbed down into a wash, and followed the sandy bed of some dried-up stream. Huge bowlders protruded every now and again from the sand, and the bearers had some difficulty in climbing over them with their burdens.

"We shall not travel much farther, for the heat is intense," said Antelope, "but we must find some safe spot to camp in ere we light our fires."

The wash they were following led them at last into the wider bed of a dried-up stream. This they followed up as it turned toward the distant peaks which they were striving to reach. But as they advanced, the walls seemed to rise on either side in huge precipices, with here and there a stunted bush of mesquite, whose seed had been cast unluckily upon some small ledge, to slowly reach a stunted growth from want of soil.

"I like not this trail," said Antelope. "With such a storm pouring its rain upon the distant hills, we are liable to be caught here and swallowed up in the waters rushing downward."

He called upon the bearers to hurry their steps, but they were weary from their long traveling in the hot sun over a rocky, unknown country, and could only move very slowly. How cool it was with the huge cliffs on either side to keep out the rays of the sun. And fantastic were the shapes outlined against the blue sky above them. They were in a box cañon, and little chance had they to escape if a cloud should burst, and the water pour down the narrow way, bearing all before it.

Antelope's face grew a shade paler, as his ear caught a distant sound, and, turning to Adobe, he said: "Do you not hear a roaring that seems far away?"

"Yes," said Adobe, "it seems to me as

though some mighty river was forcing its way to the south."

"We must get out this cañon; hurry, men, for your lives; for never shall we return home if the waters fall upon us in this place. These upright walls show not even a crevice where a squirrel could cling, much less a human being."

The bearers knew their danger and endeavored to increase their speed. They drew their breath in deep gasps and the perspiration fell from their brows in a running stream.

Antelope, in his anxiety, ran on ahead to ascertain if the walls did not slope a little out farther up. The cliff did seem to fall farther apart, but still the roaring of the waters appeared very near.

At last he found a place where, by dint of climbing, a haunt of safety might be found, and he returned to help the bearers with their burdens. He and Adobe, assisting the wearied men, made stren-

uous efforts to reach the place that Antelope had found.

Suddenly Adobe, who was leading, gave a yell; for a little distance ahead a mountain of water was dashing upon them; a dirty foam covered the top and the muddy water appeared to writhe and curl as it threw itself upon everything in its way with strenuous exertions. The men had reached the overhanging ledge, all but one bearer, who held up his hands for assistance, and whom Antelope was endeavoring to haul to a place of safety, when the water struck him, and with one wrench tore the man from his grasp. With a cry of despair the bearer strove in vain to keep his head above the swirling waters. His eyes seemed to start from their sockets and an agonized look came upon his face as a huge tree swept upon him, and rushing over him, hid him from their view for evermore.

A stupor seemed to have benumbed

the faculties of the men, and they stood dumbly watching the river which now flowed where but a short time before was but a dry and sandy bed.

Misfortunes seemed to come upon them as though they were doomed by the evil spirits. Another of their comrades gone—who would be the next? One perishing for want of water upon the distant desert, and lo, another is overwhelmed by the rushing waters and carried to his death by a raging stream.

Would they ever reach this tribe they sought in these fastness? The men murmured in their despair, and Antelope himself began to lose all hope of reaching the girl whose form seemed ever to lead him on even as a will-o'-the-wisp leads some weary traveler to his death.

They sat and watched the water as it roared past them. Ever and anon some fallen tree would float majestically by; or some swimming rattlesnake endeavor-

ing to reach the rocks, which sternly reared above them, sank below the waves. There a huge bear rolled limp and dead, caught like themselves, perchance, in some distant cañon; but less lucky, carried to its death. Thick and yellow was the stream and the huge boulders could be heard tearing and grinding as they were forced along by the stream's awful power.

The sky began to grow black, and soon the pouring rain and glaring lightning added to their discomfort and terror; for once the lightning struck an overhanging crag close by and the splintered rocks went crashing and tearing to the stream below.

Night drew on apace and all hope of leaving their narrow quarters until the morning left them. The bearers crouched with arms around their knees and muttered now and again in guttural tones to each other.

Antelope encouraged Adobe to be brave, for he, younger than his leader, would have given way under these trials, but for his words of cheer. Thus the night passed, as, huddled together, they strove to overcome the chill of the night air. Glorious was the orb of light as it threw its rays upon them, and the worn-out men gave praise to their god who thus gave them warmth and light. Antelope had been scanning the sides of the cliffs, and presently he saw where, by dint of climbing, they might reach the top of the cañon. He carefully led the way, testing each rock ere stepping upon it, or clinging to some overhanging bush.

He had reached a portion less steep than the cliff he had hitherto been climbing. Then, glancing to the right, he saw a naked savage stretched upon the ground. Several buzzards were hopping round or solemnly perched upon a rock near by, watching the approaching men

who threatened them with the loss of their meal. The brawny arms were stretched out and in his right hand still rested his trusty bow. An arrow stood straight out from his chest and showed the manner in which he had met his death. His eyes had been torn from their sockets by the greedy buzzards, who only waited the departure of the intruders to tear the body into shreds.

The traders stood a silent group round the dead man and noted the paint daubed upon face and chest and the turkey feathers plaited into the long black hair.

"Some warrior chief," remarked Antelope, "who has met his death in fighting a jealous companion most likely. The scalp would have been torn from his head had he been a tribal enemy. Well, we must hurry away as some seeking savage may come upon us at any moment. The buzzards will make short work with the dead body and soon nothing will remain

but bones to whiten and bleach in the sun.'"

From the heights to which they had climbed they could see for some distance the river tumbling and roaring below them, and thankful were they that their bodies were not resting upon the sand in some eddy to be a meal for the watching buzzards.

They traveled all that day, for the air was cool and pleasant after the rain-storm, until they reached the banks of a stream they were unable to cross. They determined to camp here and wait until the waters had fallen enough to permit their crossing without danger. So they busied themselves in making wickiups from the willows which grew in profusion near.

"That must be the place where the cliff dwellers are," said Antelope as he pointed to some cliffs a few days' journey from where they were. "We surely

must be near our journey's end and to-night we shall light a fire which may be seen by them, yet hidden from the country behind us."

The men were worn out by their journey and their feet were sore from contact with the rocks, for the sandals, made from woven grass, had almost worn from their feet and they had no means of obtaining fresh ones. The bearers were delighted at having time to rest. They bathed themselves in the running water of the swollen streams and set traps for the quail which whistled around them in profusion, or shot arrows at the doves cooing in the overhanging trees. Soon they had food in plenty, and with their parched corn made a meal fit for the gods.

The next day they climbed a hill close by and gazed across the level country lying between them and the mountains afar, but they could see nothing to tell

them that any living being other than themselves was within thousands of miles of their camping-ground.

The river fell considerably the next day, and they could almost cross it, though in places it was very deep.

Antelope was anxious to proceed, but the others restrained him, for they thought of their comrade drowned by the floods of two days ago.

That night Antelope was resting beside the blazing fire when the hoot of an owl close by made him start to a sitting position.

"Did you hear that, Adobe?"

"Yes," he replied; "it is only the hoot of an owl seeking to catch the mice with long hind legs upon which they sit up so gracefully to eat the food they find."

"So I thought; but did you not hear the tremble at the end? The savages ever use the note of the owl to call to each other from their hiding-places."

Presently a voice in the language of the cliff dwellers called to them, and on answering in a reassuring way, a man crept from behind a willow trunk and stepped into the light.

They immediately recognized a cliff dweller, although clothed in nothing but a breech clout; but on his feet were the woven sandals, and no paint was daubed upon face and skin. Antelope rose and joyfully clasped the hand of the stranger, who told him that his name was Arrow and that he had been sent by Thundercloud, the chief of their tribe, to find out the meaning of the distant fire. He had thought that the trader was nigh and had sent him to lead him to their castle if it was he.

Late they sat around the fire talking of the many perils they had escaped, and Arrow told them of the magnificent location they had to repel an enemy.

"But what of Wisdom?" said Ante-

lope. "You only speak of Thundercloud."

Then Arrow related the terrible fight with the cougar, and told how, crippled and weak, he still lived with his daughter.

"Gazelle is not married, then?"

"No, the Chief Thundercloud would wed her, but she refuses to leave her father and will not marry him."

A flush mounted to Antelope's forehead which no one noticed; his joy was great; for he was not too late, then, and Gazelle should be his own.

The traders slept well that night, for their troubles were almost over, and in two more days they would reach the castle safe from harm and danger.

The next day Arrow led them where a crossing could easily be made. He remarked that the storm had been terrible, but happily no damage had been done; though all the young girls had almost

perished, for they had been caught in the sudden cloud burst while out upon the hills, and but for Thundercloud's courage could hardly have escaped.

Antelope grit his teeth as he thought of another saving the sweet Gazelle, and jealous thoughts began to pass through his brain.

"The women have need of the colored earths," remarked Arrow, "for they have worked with much industry and all have been looking anxiously forward to your arrival at the castle. You had promised, you know, to follow, and all seemed certain that having once given your word you would never fail."

Antelope colored, for well he knew that, but for the beautiful Gazelle, he would never have taken that terrible journey in search of the wandering tribe.

But he remarked sententiously that the word of Antelope could never be

broken. Their way was easy, led by the agile Arrow, who knew where to escape the rough places and where to find the easiest trail.

Many animals started from them as they progressed, and Adobe remarked how many were the birds and animals they saw.

"Yes," said Arrow, "this is certainly the happy hunting grounds, and we wonder the savage tribes have not fallen upon us here. Wisdom says that probably the place is sacred to them and therefore they pass it by. I fear me if they find us here that the fighting will be terrible.

"See," continued Arrow, "yonder is the castle; is it not magnificent in proportions, and the position a very refuge from any attacking force?"

The traders gazed with wonder at the cliffs and could see the women climbing to the rooms above by means of short

ladders. They looked like small ants in the distance.

The bearers hurried their steps, for they were anxious to reach their destination, and soon some of the men from the castle hurried up and assisted them with their burdens.

Great was the joy of the cliff dwellers at their arrival and many were the questions asked concerning the distant tribes and had they seen any savages?

Soon Thundercloud came up and welcomed Antelope with protestations of friendship. Antelope gazed upon the muscular fellow with thoughts that were not quite so friendly, for did they not both love the beautiful Gazelle? He thought if Thundercloud knew his feelings would he be so anxious to draw him into the castle?

The women welcomed Antelope with much chattering, and gazed curiously

upon him, for some knew that Gazelle loved him.

But Gazelle, where was she? Antelope strove to find her among the women, but she was nowhere to be seen and he dared not ask for her at present.

CHAPTER VII.

THE next morning the tribe was awake early, for all were eager to examine the trader's stock of goods, although they had dwindled somewhat, owing to the loss sustained by the bearers.

Willow was there betimes, and her voice was heard in shrill bargaining with Antelope. She wanted some coloring, so she had her baskets piled around her to use as trade for the earths, but Antelope would not give her the quantity she wanted for her baskets, and refused all her bargains, till at last she became quite angry and began to twit the young man as only an angry woman could.

"What did you come all this distance for? It was not to trade, I can see that.

I warrant you that Gazelle could obtain the whole of your old stuff for nothing if she desired to have it; but she wants none of it. She remains hidden from you, though any one can see you are dying for one glance of her eyes."

"Tell me where she is," answered Antelope quickly. "How much of the earth do you want? Here, take it and tell me where I shall find her."

"I thought the trader came not here to trade; give me the earths and I shall lead you to her," quoth Willow with a grim smile. "Nay, do not tremble so, or all the old women of the tribe will say a woman has come with the bearers."

Antelope turned to Adobe, who was talking to and smiling at Sunray. She, true to her nature, was flirting with the handsome stranger and she smiled at Antelope's eagerness as he said: "Look after the wares, Adobe. This old woman is taking me to visit Wisdom, a great

chief I met the last time I was here, and I would feign talk with him awhile."

"Gazelle you mean," interjected Sun-ray "the daughter of Wisdom, a great chief you——"

But Antelope passed her by with head bent low and heard her not.

"Who is Gazelle?" questioned Adobe; "I have heard Antelope frequently talking of a beautiful girl who was always in his thoughts, but he spoke no name."

"She is the daughter of Wisdom, who was nearly killed in the fight with a cougar and she has done nothing but dream of Antelope since he was with us last."

"Whew!" said Adobe, "now I understand his mad desire to follow in the footsteps of the tribe, even though the season was against the journey. But he told me naught of the girl excepting her beauty. With me it would be different. I would talk of any girl I loved night and day."

"Didst ever love any girl?" remarked Sunray saucily, and her keen eye was quick to notice any change in him.

"Well, yes, but none could compare with your bright eyes, Sunray."

"That is a beautiful bracelet; show it me and do not talk so much. What is it made of?"

"It is made by tribes who dwell many moons from us; they dig the material from the ground, and with much labor beat it into the shapes you see. It is very expensive, and Antelope alone can sell it, for I do not know its value."

In the meantime Antelope followed Willow as she led him to Wisdom's room, and his heart fluttered as it had never done before.

Would Gazelle be there, he wondered?

Presently he heard Willow telling Wisdom of his approach and as he entered the low-built doorway he saw Gazelle sitting near her father. Her head was

bent low and she hardly noticed him. Yet Antelope saw that her skin was reddened by a deep blush. Poor Wisdom was shriveled and worn, and hardly any flesh remained upon his bones; but his eyes were bright as ever and a quiet smile greeted the trader who had traveled across the parched desert, scarcely escaping death thereby. Long Wisdom talked with the young man, questioning him as to his home and parents.

Suddenly Wisdom said: "I know that town, for did I not marry my wife, Dancing-feet, there?"

"Dancing-feet?" said Antelope. "Why, my mother spoke of a beautiful girl who married a cliff dweller, and I am certain she called her Dancing-feet. She left her home and was never heard of more."

"Yes," said Wisdom. "She was captured one day soon after Gazelle was born by a hiding savage, and whether she

lives or not I know not, but never more shall I see her again in this life."

Gazelle had listened with wide-open eyes to this conversation, and Antelope became much more fond to her on finding he was born in her mother's home.

"My poor mother (whose face I have never seen) and he have lived in the same village, have walked o'er the same trails and drank at the same spring. His mother knew my mother and they were playmates together. How strange that he should have come to our castle and that we should meet. I love him. Yes, I love him."

She blushed again as she noted that Antelope's dark eyes were fixed upon her in admiration.

He also had been surprised upon hearing that the mother of Gazelle was the friend of his parents. Here was a bond of sympathy that must prevail, and he would carry the beautiful girl back to

his home in spite of the stern Thundercloud, who he knew would prevent such a consummation if it were possible. Wisdom had noted the quick glance which Antelope turned upon his daughter, and his heart sank within him as he thought of her leaving him forever; he would be left alone to wither and die when bereft of her care and love. But what mattered it to him now? He would the sooner meet his beloved wife from whom he had been so long parted.

Gazelle rose, and calling her dog, which had lain with its head between its paws watching his beloved mistress, she stroked his long glossy hair with fingers which trembled as they did so, and with heightened color she left the room, followed by her dog. Antelope's piercing eye strove to catch one glance as she passed, but in vain.

"Poor child," murmured Wisdom, "she feels my crippled condition more

than I myself; for, bereft of her mother, she clings to me with more love than a child gives its parent usually, and when the savage cougar destroyed my strength and left me unable to lead the tribe, it was like tearing her heartstrings to see Thundercloud step into my place. Thundercloud would marry her, but she loves him not, and when I die, which seems to me to be close at hand, who will cherish her? For I fear that he will compel her to marry him."

Antelope sprang to his feet: "Never!" he cried, "shall Thundercloud take the beautiful Gazelle if she does not desire it. Ah, Wisdom, many weary miles have I traveled to see once more her gentle face. Will you not give her to me? In my mother's village I shall heap on her such care as you did on her mother, Dancing-feet."

The tears rose to Wisdom's eyes as he grasped the strong hand of the young

trader, and he at once gave his daughter to him, for well he knew that Gazelle's delight would be great and that she truly loved him.

"But, Antelope, we must be circumspect, for if Thundercloud knew, never would you reach your home in the far south. I know his stern and determined will and he only waits my death to seize the girl for his bride, even though she hates him. We must wait, and none must know that you seek Gazelle in marriage."

"But I would talk with Gazelle," Antelope said quickly.

Wisdom thought a little time, and then said: "I know Willow will help us out."

"What, Willow? Why, her temper is swift to rise and I doubt her love for me, for she only led me here after I had paid her well in the earths she was longing for."

"She would never have led you if she

did not care for Gazelle, for she, I am certain, knows of her love for you. Stay here, Antelope, and I shall bring her in."

Wisdom drew some sticks near, and slowly raising himself, hobbled with many grunts outside in order to seek Willow.

He had not far to go, for she had patiently waited his coming; she knew that they would need her.

On being called she quickly followed him to the room.

"Willow," said Wisdom, as she sat beside them, "Antelope desires to marry Gazelle, but I fear Thundercloud, who, you know, would never allow her to leave the castle. You loved her mother; help us, good Willow; for cunning as the fox are you to help a friend in need."

Her black eyes glanced at Antelope, and a smile widened her lips as she noted his drawn, white face.

"What can I do?" said Willow. "I

love Gazelle and would risk much to see her happy; but Thundercloud is all-powerful here, and I would not give a wild pear for his life if once he knew that Antelope loved Gazelle."

"Antelope would speak with Gazelle alone, and you must watch that none approach, and we will think of what must be done."

Willow rose, and leading Antelope out, pointed to a thick bush of grapevines which clung to the surrounding trees and hung in festoons all around, forming a bower 'neath which a dozen people could hide in safety, said: "You will find her there, for I saw that she and her dog, Scamp, made for that place after leaving the castle, and that I know is her favorite dreaming spot."

With quick steps Antelope climbed down the roughly made ladders, and creeping along the narrow ledges, for he was yet unaccustomed to their narrow-

ness, at last reached the foot of the cliffs, and crossing the running stream, found the bower beside some huge rocks.

A low growl was the first sound he heard. On turning, he saw Gazelle seated on a flat stone, holding her dog companion with all her strength. He, with raised lips and glittering tusks, would have sprung upon the intruder but for her restraining hands.

"Down, Scamp, down!" she said as soon as she recognized Antelope. The dog, passive and quiet, sunk at her feet, his head between his paws and watched the stranger with brown eyes that took in his every movement.

Antelope could hardly distinguish her when he entered from the glare; but soon his eyes became accustomed to the shade, and he saw his beloved Gazelle sitting with downcast eyes.

"How did you find me?" at last murmured the girl. "I thought this spot was unknown to any one.

"Willow directed me and I came."

"What, Willow, my mother's friend?
Alas! no friend have I."

"Gazelle, one friend you have. One who has traveled many moons, who has crossed the parched desert and faced death to see you once again. Many times have I dreamed of you since I first saw you at the castle of hills, for then I loved you: and when your father requested me to follow your tribe in its travels north your brown eyes drew me on and I could not refuse. I returned to our village and my mother would have me settle and travel no more. But you, Gazelle, was ever present before me and I could not stay. Your form ever led me on, until to-day I stand beneath the twining tendrils of this grapevine and ask you for your love. Your father, Gazelle, will give you to me, and with the more pleasure since our parents are from the same tribe,

"Ah, Gazelle," he cried, as he stood, his manly form erect, his head thrown back and hands outstretched, "come to me and I shall love you as none can. Come to me, for soon your father will die. Who, then, will protect you? In our village we shall live in peace together."

Gazelle had risen, and Scamp stood quietly by as her hand rested upon his faithful head. This restrained his anger, but his eyes were raised to the face of his mistress with wondering gaze.

Her head drooped upon her breast, and she felt her breath come and go until she could hardly breathe. She leaned toward the trader, but said not a word.

Antelope saw the flushed face, the trembling limbs of the lovely girl, and drawing near, he clasped her in his arms and pressed upon her brow his lips, she, yielding to his caresses, at last raised her face, and Antelope saw such love beaming from her eyes that his soul was

filled with delight, and the joy he felt requited him for all the dangers he had passed through.

"Ah, Antelope," said Gazelle, "I love you, yes, I love you. Long have I waited for you, and sometimes thought that you would never return."

Long they sat and talked of their joy until a soft "hist" brought them to thought of this world, and the sudden appearance of Willow startled them from their seats.

"You must be careful, for Thundercloud has been seeking you, Antelope. He desired to gain some arrow-points; but Adobe, the clod, directed him to Wisdom, where he said he would find you, and now he is waiting there for you with compressed lips and knit brow. He has wondered where Gazelle was, and almost suspects that you are with her.

"Here, take these herbs and again visit Wisdom. You must pretend that

you have sought these for him, and have only found them after much seeking. Gazelle, you come with me, for Sunray knows that you love Antelope, and we must disarm her mischief for I am certain she loves Thundercloud, and will help you in any way to escape him. Yet is she jealous that Thundercloud will not notice her, but follows you everywhere and therefore may do you harm."

With a glance of love Antelope sprung into the glare of the sun, and with hurrying steps, climbed the castle walls until he reached the room of Wisdom.

"Wisdom," he cried as he rushed in without noticing Thundercloud, "here are the herbs I told you of, whose juice will, I am sure, bring strength to your torn limb. Long I sought them along the cañon, searching the places my mother has so often told me to seek in, and at last my labor was rewarded, for I here I bring you the Yerba Santa which will soon give you health."

Wisdom took the herb in his hands, and Antelope, turning suddenly, met the gaze of Thundercloud. "Ah, Thundercloud, you here? So pleased was I at finding the sacred herb that I failed to see you sitting in the gloom."

"Ugh!" grunted Thundercloud.

"A tea of this cannot fail to bring strength to Wisdom's fading life, and long I searched the cliffs and gulches until success rewarded me."

Thundercloud eyed him sternly, but he could fathom nothing in the open face of the famous trader. So he quietly asked for obsidian arrow-points which he needed for his arrows.

"Yes," said Antelope, "many I have in my stock, and we shall go to where my bundles cumber your castle."

"The castle is yours," returned Thundercloud, and rising from the ground, he bowed to Wisdom and motioned Antelope to follow. Antelope began to give

Wisdom minute directions as to the boiling, etc., of the herb, but suddenly he said: "I shall return and direct more fully the preparation of the medicine," then quickly followed the sub-chief.

"Ah, Thundercloud, beautiful were the arrow-points I lost on this trip, for so sudden was the flood that many bundles were washed away. But still I have some most beautiful points made by wondrous experts. I have also some fine axes, but not many, for their weight prevents me from carrying them across the desert land."

Thus Antelope chatted about his wares, but Thundercloud took no more notice of what he said, and stalked straight and stern to where Adobe sat guarding the bundles. Sunray was still talking and laughing with the boy, but the quick glance she gave Antelope displayed her interest in the appearance of the two men, rivals for the hand of Gazelle.

But Adobe, dumb as ever, saw nothing in the arrival of the two men together, and burst out with a joyful cry of: "Well, Antelope, I am glad to see you, for what a time you have been away. The women have almost bought up the stock I know the value of. See these beautiful baskets? The willow is woven so close that water can easily be held in them, and the markings and designs, are they not beautiful? What coloring! What care and skill in making the pattern just so! I doubt if even you have seen better made."

Antelope had bitten his lips in annoyance when Adobe spoke of his long absence, and replied that he had been searching for herbs which would tempt the wise Chief Wisdom, now at death's door. Sunray looked up furiously, but said not a word.

Antelope was soon opening some small bundles and displayed their contents to

the interested gaze of the chief. Several men drew near and many exclamations of delight were heard as the glittering arrow-heads lay in all their pristine glory; sharp as a needle the points and of every shape and color; here an obsidian black as night; there a quartz as white as snow; and yonder the blunt pointed arrows with which to kill the birds and smaller animals.

Soon the bargaining began. Thunder-cloud produced some beautiful skins, cured with care, and Antelope's eyes glistened when he saw a magnificent bear skin among the others.

This was the skin obtained from the bear killed the day they reached the cliffs, and beautiful were the white tips and silvery sheen of the hair. Thunder-cloud had picked out the arrow-points he most desired when he saw a turquoise; then a copper necklet took his fancy, and he would buy it for Gazelle. Antelope

knew his object and raised the price, but at last put it into the hands of the chief, receiving skins innumerable for the pretty toys. Thundercloud gave a grunt of satisfaction, for surely he could obtain the love of Gazelle with the jewels he would heap upon her, but he did not know that these things would have no charm for her, and that Antelope alone was beloved by her.

He still had some beaver skins which he had taken from a dam close by, when he saw a stone hammer which any chief would long for as a weapon of defense.

Wisdom had one twin brother to this, and he had treasured the weapon as his most valuable property, and when he was dead he had said that this should be buried with him. It was an intensely hard, dark, greenish stone, polished and rubbed until it shone again; the center was hollowed in order that a thong wound round could not slip; a strip of

buffalo hide was drawn around, twisted and then straightened, then allowed to harden in the sun. This formed a handle ever flexible, yet stiff and strong. Many an enemy had fallen from the crushing blow given with this weapon by the strong right arm of Wisdom. Often Thunder-cloud had longed for it and here was one exactly like it in every respect. He picked it up and glanced at it casually.

"What do you want for this, Antelope? It seems very clumsily made," he said, as he carelessly put it down.

"Clumsily!" said Antelope, for he had caught the gleam in his eye when he first noticed it. "That was made by the cleverest artificer of the northern plains and has been carried many miles before reaching my hands. I want many skins for that."

Antelope was a clever trader and knew how to bargain with the chief. "Others

have desired to own it, but none had the value in skins that I would have."

Thundercloud looked at his bundle of skins which had now grown small and offered them, but Antelope laughed in derision.

"No, never. That is worth a chief's ransom and you offer me a few beggarly skins."

Thundercloud spread his hands in answer. "You have all."

Suddenly a thought struck Antelope, why not make the chief his friend?" He saw his longing for the implement and that he would give anything he had for it. To think was to act with Antelope.

"Thundercloud," he said, "you have treated me and mine well and I have done nothing. Will you not receive a present from me? Accept this hammer, fit, indeed, for so brave a chief. Accept this as a small return for all your kindness to me."

The tribesmen gave grunts of satisfaction and several said: "It is good."

Thundercloud received the present with ecstasy and poured thanks upon Antelope, who said that it was a small matter as compared with what he had done. Had he not sent out runners to search for him and bring him in? Thus words of mutual praise passed between them. Again Thundercloud thanked the trader and strode from the midst of the admiring crowd with joyful mien.

Antelope had done well; the artful trader had won the good will of the chief, and it was good.

CHAPTER VIII.

ADOBE had looked admiringly upon his superior during his bargaining with Thundercloud, and after the chief had departed, praised him for his generosity. "That hammer was worth a great deal. Why did you give it to the chief?"

"Ah! thickhead!" said Antelope, "of more value to me was the good will of the chief than ten hammers. Dost know that we are far from home, and at his mercy? We must buy his good will, and pay taxes to the pueblo. It is thus we traders grow rich. Be good to the powerful, and then we get every skin from the tribesmen for little or nothing, and it is useless for them to complain."

"Why, yes, of course," said Adobe. "I never thought of that."

"Do you imagine that you will ever be a trader? Do you ever think of anything but smiling at every pretty girl you see? What have you and Sunray been doing the livelong morning? She was here when I left, and when I returned I still find her chattering."

"You may well wonder at the time, for if, as Sunray says, you were with Gazelle the whole morning, you also must have done some chattering. Sunray says that Gazelle is very beautiful. Why have you not told me of her before? And that Thundercloud would wed her. Is it so?"

"Never! never! by the sun she shall never wed him. For sooner shall I kill her, then die with her, than see her his bride."

"You are indeed a trader, now I see why presents are given; but it is useless; for Thundercloud would have Gazelle in spite of all your presents, so Sunray says."

"Sunray seems to be drying all the thickness from your skull, Adobe, and soon her glances will turn thee into dust. Does she love you? or is she fooling you? for Willow most certainly said she loved the Chief Thundercloud."

"What, Thundercloud, that stern, grim man? Never!"

Adobe's face became sad and drawn, and he turned to Antelope with extended hand. I love the girl and greater help shall I give you to overcome the chief. Henceforth we are one in feeling and purpose, and we must overcome him."

They both gazed on the tribesmen grouped about the streamlet and saw the women fill their *ojahs* with water from the brook, placing the circle upon their heads and balancing the pottery so that not one drop of the fluid fell as they glided erect and graceful toward the cliff. There, the gayest of the gay, laughed the dancing sprite Sunray, ban-

tering the women and shining upon the men until all were filled with joy and laughter.

"If Gazelle were not it seems to me that none could be more beautiful than Sunray, and the men of our pueblo will wonder at the brides we will bring to our homes, Adobe."

"The sun above alone can tell. Who knows the dangers we may have to overcome," he replied.

Antelope began to busy himself with the goods piled around him. He examined the baskets and packed them one within the other. The pottery was excellent and difficult it would be to carry it without breaking, for in spite of all he could do some would surely crack. The skins were large and the fur was thick, for these were animals which had not seen many hunters and had lived a life free from the fear of death. Presently he drew from a hidden place a small

bundle. It was carefully wrapped around with cloth spun from the fiber of the bayonet plant, fine and white as linen.

"See, Adobe, are these not beautiful?" and he showed him a valuable necklet made of fossil shells polished until they shone again alternating with pieces of turquoise of intense blue. A small hole had been carefully drilled through each, and having been strung upon a deer tendon, made a beautiful ornament.

Adobe's eyes glistened, for he had never seen so beautiful an ornament, and well he knew who would wear it as he saw Antelope caress and rub the brilliant necklet.

"I have brought this for Gazelle, and I go now to take it to her. Guard well the merchandise, Adobe, for I shall soon return."

Adobe gave a grim smile while closely packing the earthen plates one within

the other, and watched the trader walk with rapid steps toward the castle.

The castle looked beautiful indeed that bright summer's day. The yellow walls gleamed golden 'neath the sun's rays, except where the overhanging roof threw a well marked shade along the upper walls and the trees bending o'er seemed to be striving to gaze upon the wondrous change below, while their branches rustled a chorus of questions as the breeze fluttered through them. Antelope at last reached the lower ladders, slowly climbing the rough rungs as he mounted to the steps, then carefully sidled along a narrow ridge until he reached a smaller ladder, which, placed against an open way, gave entrance to the castle. He soon found the passage which took him to Wisdom's apartment, and at his approach the soft tones of Gazelle's voice bade him enter.

Wisdom clasped the hand of the young

man and motioned him to a seat beside him, while the smile of joy he saw upon the face of Gazelle filled his heart with delight.

Presently he drew the parcel from his bosom, undid the strings and displayed to view the lovely necklet. Bending forward he tied it round her neck, and when he saw the light of happiness in her eyes it fully compensated him for all his trouble in obtaining the ornament.

Wisdom was struck with the value of the present and he quietly chuckled as he drew the girl toward him and placed her hand in Antelope's: "Take her, Antelope, and may you have a happier life than the old man who gives her to you. I thought you would never marry," he said, as he turned to Gazelle, "and leave the old father alone in the world, but it is different when Antelope seeks."

She threw herself into her father's arms. "I will never leave you till you

die," she cried, as the tears poured from her eyes.

"Not long will you have to wait," he sadly spoke, "for even now I feel the clutch of grim death upon my body."

"Ah, say not so, father, dear. Surely the Yerba Santa will bring strength to your weak limbs."

Antelope thought of his mother in her distant pueblo and his heart grew sad. Yet he spoke with cheerful tone, and said the brave chief should go with them and live with them for aye.

"It cannot be," quoth Wisdom. "I would not leave my tribe, useless though I am, and his dark eyes shadowed by hair white as the driven snow, gleamed clear and bright from his brown, shrunken face. Whither my tribe goes there must I be. But Gazelle, my daughter, it cannot be long before I die and in Antelope's care no danger can assail you."

The youthful couple when they noticed the trembling hands, withered and gaunt, drew near, and hand in hand knelt to receive his paternal blessing. It seemed to them that at any moment he might draw his last breath. For they knew that having obtained his blessing their happiness would be complete.

Raising his eyes upward as he placed his hands upon their heads, the aged chief implored the Sun God to pour down blessing upon the twain and to grant them health and plenty all through their lives.

Hardly had they risen to their feet ere footsteps were heard in the passage and soon Willow, with bending back, had entered the small room.

“Ah, at last I have found you. I have searched the whole tribe to find you in vain. What is it I hear in the tribe of your having presented a valuable hammer to Thundercloud. Is it so? Of

little use will it be to have done that, you foolish man if he hears of Gazelle's betrothment. Even now I saw him set out to bring his presents to Gazelle. Therefore I came to tell you you must leave ere he discovers you here."

Antelope arose, and after whispering words of love to Gazelle, bade Wisdom farewell and left.

Hardly had he disappeared when the footsteps of Thundercloud were heard approaching, and on his entering Wisdom was struck with the ecstasy that showed in his face as he slowly began uncovering some small parcel. Soon the bracelet he had obtained from Antelope was seen, and with gentle grace the stern man presented the bauble to Gazelle; but she would not receive it at first until Willow, with voluble upbraidings, persuaded her to accept the present. The delight of Thundercloud was pitiful to see, yet none dared tell him that his presents were all in vain.

Soon he and Wisdom were discussing the dances to be given in the future, for it was nearing the time when the snake dances would take place, and the evil spirits be placated which otherwise would destroy the crops and bring misfortunes to the tribe. Serpent had caused to be built the hall of ceremony in readiness for this time, and he had named the braves who would take part in the ceremonies; but many times would the sun sink to rest ere all would be in readiness for the tussle with the spirits.

Wisdom told Thundercloud all he knew with extreme minuteness, and the time passed quickly as they talked in the guttural tones of their tribe, and so intent in their conversation that no thought had they of time. Thundercloud was strict and zealous that every minutæ should be carried out and none could be more so than he when undertaking any ceremony handed down by

the head men. Most particular was he, therefore, in obtaining all that Wisdom knew of the various games.

In the meantime Gazelle quietly withdrew and sought the shade of the overhanging grapevines. There, to her surprise, she found Antelope awaiting her with fond impatience.

"Dear Gazelle," he cried, "how glad I am that at last you have come. I thought you would never be able to escape the sub-chief."

"He is discussing the games with my father and so intent was he that he never noticed when I left the room."

"You could never leave me without my observing your departure," replied Antelope as he held her hand, which was playing with the necklet that still hung around her long, bending neck.

"When will you be mine, and come with me to my mother's home?"

"I dare not leave my poor father, for

there is none to tend him were I to leave him; besides Thundercloud would pursue us, even to your own pueblo were I to flee with you, and how could we save ourselves? We must wait, Antelope, something will happen to help us, I feel very certain. See how the great God led you to me in spite of many dangers safe and sound and he will help us I am sure."

"What is that?" said Antelope as a rustling in the leaves was heard. They both turned in the direction whence the sound came, and who should approach but Willow. Old and unkempt though she appeared, her hair gray and her back bent with the care and toil of her many years, still her eyes beamed kindly upon them and in spite of the wrinkles which crossed and recrossed the sunburned skin of her face she looked benevolent. "Glad, indeed, I am to find you here," she said, as she stooped to seat herself

upon a leaf-strewn rock, "for none will disturb us in this secret place. . I have much to say to you concerning the stern Thundercloud. Do you know that it is already whispered abroad among the women of the tribe that you, Antelope, have traveled across the desert to wed our beautiful Gazelle? And little would the life of Antelope be worth were these reports to reach the ear of Thundercloud. I have striven to disabuse their minds of such an idea; laughed at the old women, scolded the young and argued with Sunray, who I am sure is at the bottom of this idea until my throat is sore and my head aches. Sunray is difficult to approach, for she, the companion of Gazelle, knows her better than any other. She, you know, loves Thundercloud; and though pleased that Gazelle will have nothing of him, still she is jealous of his love for her; but in spite of this, yet more jealous of his power as chief of the tribe.

She therefore would sooner lose him herself than see him lose the desire of his heart—the bride he would have to share his home. If only Adobe could attract her to him, much more safe would you be, for then her interest in Thundercloud would cease and she would be more likely to further your interests; but we must not despair. Soon the snake dance will stop all thought of love and the excitement remove any ideas the women may have. Adobe must be thrown in her way. He is comely and since his arrival I have noticed that Sunray gazes less suspiciously upon you. Thundercloud also is intent upon the games, for he is anxious that they should be perfection under his leadership, and the deep study is driving all thought of love from his mind.

“You, Antelope, will take part in them surely, for the men expect you to do so and give them any corrections that

may be required. That will be an excuse for your remaining that cannot be gained and many things may happen before they are finished."

"Yes, Serpent has spoken to me and prayed me to assist them. I had almost refused, but your advice is good and I shall surely remain for them."

Gazelle gently pressed the brown hand of the trader and her liquid eyes beamed lovingly upon him. She had anxiously awaited his reply, and his answer had removed a great load from her breast; for while Antelope was present she had no fear of what might come.

In the meantime they had left their leafy bower and stood 'neath the shade of the tall trunk of a mesquite plant. Huge bunches of yellow blossoms exuded a heavy perfume and the deep buzz of insects, or the hum of the humming bird as it darted with brilliantly tinted plumage from cup to cup, gave

a feeling of peace and rest to their anxious minds.

Antelope saw that several trunks had been cut down and the stumps, which were hollowed out, exuded a milky fluid which several Indians were ladling with small gourds into larger ones. This the Indians drank with great gusto, and what remained was set aside in large *ojahs* to ferment, when an intoxicating liquor dear to the men was formed. Many miles had they to travel before reaching this plant in the castle of hills; but here close at hand it covered the side of the hills, and they were unable to use all the plants that raised their huge flowers so many feet above them.

A number of men were gathering the ears of corn which they had deposited in the new ground, and though few the grains they planted the crop exceeded their fondest hope and the quantity of deep red ears laid aside by the women

to plant in the spring was very large, while still larger the quantity they strung up to the ceiling in the rooms of the castle. Good and wholesome it was, but not so pure as the red corn so much valued by the farmers for planting in the fields and therefore laid aside to be crushed into meal for the bread of life.

Antelope turned to Gazelle and murmured: "Ah, would I were in my village with you beside me. Never more would I leave it to wander afar, but in the tribal home I should help gather the corn and mescal, hunt the jack-rabbit and gather in skins, while you diligently wove cloth from the yucca plant, formed sandals from the wild grass, and baskets from the split willow; or having gathered the straight willow twigs, watch you straighten every curve between your snow-white teeth until true and straight, the dry shaft was ready for the arrow-point and eagle feather.

"I would I might have the wings of yonder eagle soaring so far above us, for then we could flee this lofty castle and safely I should bear you to my distant home across the burning deserts."

"Have courage, Antelope, and all will be well in spite of every danger."

Willow had left them as they stood talking together, and joining several other women, sat with a *matata* between her feet and vigorously crushed the several grains, quickly grinding it with vigorous pushes of the *mano* into a soft meal which was brushed into an earthen bowl that stood ready beside her. As she worked she talked of the snake dances which were soon to take place, and how Antelope was to be the leader of the Snake carriers; for Serpent willed that the trader should be honored, for he would tell them things they might not know, and correct any errors which might have crept into the ceremonies.

Thus she communed with them, for then none would notice the couple standing near with the love light in their eyes as they gazed across the distant plains, longing for the time when no fear of the terrible chief would cloud their lives.



CHAPTER IX.

WISDOM decided to call a meeting of the priests and chiefs, to determine upon the date of the great snake dances. Antelope had been invited to participate in these debates and ceremonies; an invitation which he gladly accepted.

There was great excitement among the tribe, for together with the ceremonies was combined much fun and pleasure for the women and children. Much they enjoyed this fun, coming, as it did, but once a year, it was a novelty to them. The women were laboring and straining to grind sufficient meal from the stored corn for the sacred rites; since much was required and time and labor it took to crush it on the *matatas*. The men were finishing up the priestly implements and preparing for the

rites. The priests had caused to be built the lodge rooms of the two great orders of the tribe and there was therefore one for the Antelopes and another for the Snake priests. These were built at either end of the cleared playground of the tribe with much skill and care.

After great deliberation and many arguments, for Wisdom wished the ceremony to be delayed until more food had been obtained for the winter months, while Serpent, who put more stress on the ceremonies themselves, would have them performed as soon as possible, for, he said, the evil spirits would not be placated if they were put off longer—the convention decided that sixteen suns should rise and fall before the final feast and dance would take place. Immediately eleven of the braves were elected as Antelopes for the ceremonies, and twelve were appointed as Snakes by their fellows, to arrange and take part in the dance.

Among the Antelopes, Antelope was appointed the leader, and Thundercloud was the chief of the Snakes. Serpent, the high priest, recounted the forms and rites, and initiated the novices into the secrets of the orders, for he had received his training at the great tribal meetings, and so sacred was this that no single word of the narratives related could be forgotten; for if one missed a word the others would immediately correct the mistake, however small it might be.

The two lodges retired to their respective lodge rooms, and for the present were engaged in the secret ceremonies known only to the members of each order. But on a certain day Thundercloud left his lodge room, and, decked in all the decorations of his order, strode with majestic mien to the lodge room of the Antelopes. There he and Antelope smoked the pipe of peace, and Antelope, producing three strings with red feathers,

presented them with many grunts and guttural sentences to Thundercloud, upon which he sprinkled some sacred meal over the prayer sticks, which stood in a row at the back of the room, and then returned with the Antelope gifts. At once Antelope began with all the skill he had, "and clever as a painter was he," to construct the Antelope altar.

Colored sands were brought him by the attendant acolytes, and first forming a square, he spread separate borders one inside the other to represent the earth and sky. The pouring clouds and shooting lightning was portrayed with vivid reality in the center, then he placed around the square an ear of corn, a feather and string, to represent the products of their skill. Calling upon the gods to increase the supply for the coming year, he placed the medicine bowl near, and grouped around trays containing the prayer sticks, while heaps of

meal were placed as offerings to the spirits.

Thundercloud had not nearly so elaborate preparations; but the snake sticks were all prepared, and ranged along the wall, while above two bags containing serpents hung. Round the room were earthen vases containing the snakes for the ritual.

These had been gathered far and wide by the seeking braves, and the snake den found on the day of the picnic was depleted of its inhabitants by Serpent, whom Sunray had led there, to his great satisfaction.

On the fourteenth day Antelope commanded the red bows to be displayed, and ordered his assistants to carve the prayer sticks. This they did with much diligence, having first decorated their hair with brilliantly dyed feathers. Then squatted in a bunch upon the meal-covered floor, they formed the different

shapes; specimens of corn, vines of pumpkins, and other plants were tied in small bundles with yucca twine, and placed before the altar to be soon carried in their dance. Antelope clothed Adobe, who was with him in the Antelope lodge, with a large deer skin, and giving him an ear of corn and empty *ojah*, sent him to fill it with water from the running spring near by. On his return, Antelope, with much ceremony took them from him, and blowing smoke over them, laid them before the altar; sprinkling them with sacred meal as he did so, and calling upon the gods to bring them food and water for the ensuing year. Antelope ordered a small hut to be built, and soon the priests were busy costuming themselves for the Antelope dance, which took place at night time. The Antelopes had fox skins dangling from their waist and kilts woven from yucca fiber. Their faces were painted with white stripes,

while in their hands were carried rattles of bone. The Snakes had painted their faces with black stripes, while each man was ornamented with necklaces and jewels.

Antelope approached the snakes, and finding them prepared, returned to his lodge room. Soon he emerged, carrying his staff of office, and a bow decorated with red horsehair. Following him came Adobe with his water and corn, while a third carried the medicine bowl. Thus preceding his members, he strode with measured tread around the playground. They soon began a weird chant, and as they circled round, scattered sacred meal far and wide as an offering to the gods. Four times they did this, then drew up in line, and awaited the Snakes, who, led by Thundercloud, carrying a bow, went through the same evolutions, and ranged in front of the Antelopes, who were chanting and shaking their rattles.

The men locked arms, and swayed backward and forward in time to their singing, while Thundercloud and Antelope strode between the lines toward the hut, where he took the small bundles of corn, carrying them in his mouth, while the chanting and dancing went on systematically.

At last the bundles were returned to the lodge room, and there sprinkled with water, while the opposing lines, still chanted their monotone. At last, with circling steps, they each filed away to their respective rooms, and the thanksgiving dances were finished. Antelope received much praise for his care in the ceremonies, and all said that none had been performed so beautifully before. Gazelle had watched with pride his powerful form and commanding voice as he marshaled his men, and with pride she heard the women praising the southern trader, whose strength and

grace appealed to their feminine minds as no mental power would. Antelope began to feel tired after all the exertions he was putting forth, for the whole of the previous night had been taken up in chanting, dancing, and pouring libations of sacred meal upon the priestly offerings. Still more dancing would have to be done before the final winding up of the ceremonies. He cast himself upon the ground to rest, and soon the sleep of the weary closed his eyes, and he only awoke to find the denizens of the forest awaking with praise at the rising of the sun.

He gathered his men together, and began a low chant of praise to the great orb of light, as they consecrated their prayer sticks.

Soon the young men of the tribe, ready for the snake race to start, gathered around; and among them stood Adobe also ready to strive for the prize. Antelope,

with many cautions, started them in the snake race, which all were so anxious to win. With long, springing strides, they raced up hill and down dale, jumping from rock to rock, until their breath began to come in short gasps, and the sweat poured in streams from the skin.

Two men led the bunch, and they strained every nerve as they neared the goal. The men women and children in excited groups cheered on the racing twain, and as they approached nearer, it was seen that Adobe slightly led. With one mighty effort, he flung himself across the intervening space, and fell fainting at the feet of Antelope. He, with words of praise, handed him a prayer stick, a preventative for all trouble for the ensuing year, a guardian against all the evil spirits which roamed at will.

Now came the children's turn, and with shrill cries and laughter, they

gathered in a group below. Bearing in their hands corn, pumpkin, and other plants they suddenly rushed upon the people who stood at the foot of the cliff. The men and women strove to seize the carried objects, the children escaping their hands with much laughter and excitement. Some of the children began to cry on losing their treasures, when suddenly a warrior in all the trickery of his trade, strode into the crowd whirling an object that hummed and roared as it revolved. The Antelope priests surrounded him and accompanied him with solemn steps to the lodge room, there to go through the cleansing ceremonies in preparation for the snake dance.

Seated in a circle, they grouped around the fireplace and smoked. Then, crouching upon the floor, they took a pinch of ashes which was held tightly in the hand, while one of the number sang in a low tone, then spitting on the ashes,

they cast them out of the hut. A bundle of roots was passed around which all nibbled, then spitting on their hands they rubbed their bodies to purify them, finally depositing their feather headgears upon the altar.

Antelope was very particular that each form was done exactly, and many days had been occupied in preparing the men in the ritual. They had all become perfect, and soon the final dance would be performed and the feast of thanksgiving finish the performance. The women had carefully prepared the playground, brushing it clean, and scattering white sand over it until it shone white and pure in the noonday sun.

Antelope had little time to devote to Gazelle, and only saw her when she stood among the women as they sat around watching the dancers, or scattered the meal from their basins upon the whirling warriors.

Wisdom, poor fellow, felt his enforced retirement from the excitement of leadership, yet watched with pride how Antelope led the men in the rites and ceremonies.

"Ah!" he murmured, "he is a man fit to wed the daughter of a chief, and he shall have Gazelle in spite of all who oppose." Yet he shuddered as he watched the stalwart chief Thundercloud, who, in all the pride of his leadership of the Snakes, strode with haughty brow around the playground. Well he knew that the determined chief would brook no opposition, and as leader of the tribe none would dare to oppose him.

Gazelle as she sat near her father often caught him gazing upon her with sad eyes that seemed to forebode much suffering for her, and ever as she did she smiled upon him, though her face grew pale whenever she saw Thundercloud stride near her.

But the time for the final dance drew near, and the excitement became intense as the preparations were perfected. At length the great hour arrived, and the tribe awaited the dance with a nervous desire to have it finished.

Just before sunset, Thundercloud drew near the hut of the Antelopes, and finding them in readiness, retired to his own lodge room, from which he led his men forth. He divided them into groups of three as they stood in line facing the Antelopes, who had also appeared, decorated in all the glory of their order, and who stood a silent line of men, facing the Snakes, and watching their movements as Thundercloud appointed a carrier of the snakes, a hugger of the carrier and a gatherer to gather the serpents when they fell.

Antelope began to sing in a solemn monotone, which was taken up by the followers, who waved themselves backward

and forward in unison to the song, stamping the ground with their feet until it shook again.

Then each group of three approached the lodge room and the carrier received from Thundercloud in the interior his serpent, which was placed in his mouth. The hugger watched closely the serpent, and with eagle feathers directed the snake's attention by thrusting at its face the eagle feathers held in their hands. The several groups danced around the playground, amid the greatest excitement, and after doing so cast the snakes in the center, where they were seized by the gatherer who continued the wild dance. Many of the men frothed at the mouth; their wild eyes gleaming with their frenzy and one man suddenly fell to the ground in a deep trance, but none took notice of him.

Soon Thundercloud sprang into the center and with sacred meal drew an im-

mense circle on the ground, crossing with radial lines the center of the circle. The carriers dancing, and the others yelling, approached the circle, when the serpents were cast in a writhing mass upon the ground. The women shrieked in their fear, and the children drew closer to their parents as they saw the snakes raise their heads, and hiss wildly. But a man appeared with the medicine bowl, the contents of which were sprinkled over the serpents, when the women and maidens scattered over the writhing mass, shower upon shower of crushed cornmeal. Then at a given signal, the priests rushed forward, clutching fearlessly the twisting reptiles, and carrying them some distance, threw them to the four cardinal points, whence the terrified serpents fled away to their distant homes in the rocks.

As the priests fled, carrying their captives, the members of the tribe showered

saliva upon them from the higher grounds, until their naked bodies were covered with the ejected material.

Then all rushed to take part in the final feast which the women had been preparing the whole day, and which consisted of every variety of food the tribe could obtain. Mealcakes, corn, parched and boiled; dried deer meat, roast rabbit, and birds in profusion; pumpkins baked over the heated embers, mescal obtained from the century plant; prickly pears, honey, wild walnuts, cakes of the mesquite bean and piñon nuts. Soon the wild uproar which followed showed the joy felt by the tribe that the evil spirits had been placated, and that the gods would favor them with rich crops the ensuing season.

Thundercloud rushed hither and thither among the excited men, laughing and singing in his joy that the snake dance conducted by him had been so

successful; while Wisdom, alone with his torn body, remembered the time when none could excel him in the ceremonies and dances.

Gazelle had joined with the women in sprinkling the sacred meal, throwing it more vigorously when Antelope drew near, until his eyes turned toward her, and he smiled upon her. Then was she filled with joy, and she longed for the time when he would be hers, and hers only. Then she would be far from this fear that was consuming her very life.

She had assisted the elders in cooking the food for the feast, and Willow had remarked that such a cook as Gazelle should have been married long ago, for so carefully she ground the meal that the cake made with it seemed to melt in the mouth. Wisdom had sat beside her as she worked and he seemed older and more decrepit than usual. He crooned an old love song he had sung long years

before, and his hand shook as he laid it gently upon the soft, round arm of his daughter.

Her quick eye noticed the change in him, and with anxious questionings, she asked him if he felt as well as usual.

“Why such questions, my daughter?” he answered in a voice that shook and quivered as he spoke. “As well as usual, but weak, very weak. Methinks that soon I shall go to seek my wife, who so long has left my side. Happy indeed would I be to escape the pain of this torn and shriveled body, but that you would be left alone to fight your own battles. If only Antelope was wedded to you, I should die happy, for sad I am when the sports and the games are in progress, and I sit an outsider and watcher alone in my weakness.”

Antelope at this moment came toward them, and seizing the old man's hand, shook it with iron grasp.

“Well done, my son,” cried the old man; “the ceremonies were perfect, and not one mistake did I see, though I watched closely for the errors the young are liable to make in their energy and zeal. Great care must have been taken to have made the band so perfect, and I thank the gods who have given me permission to see once more the great snake dances. I think that soon my spirit will fly away from this carrion body and Gazelle will be left in your care.”

“Ah! no, father, dear, I shall seek out herbs which will bring back hope and courage to your brain, and long you will live to smile upon your children, and children’s children.”

The young man raised the old one in his arms, and hardly bending under the burden, strode with rapid steps toward the castle. The excitement of the day had been too much for the old man, and he seemed very weak and tired. Gazelle

gathered together her belongings, and followed with slower steps the two men, having first filled an *ojah* at the running stream, which she raised to her head. She walked with stately steps and queenly bearing up the dizzy heights, and not one drop of the precious moisture was spilled in the journey. Antelope, having placed the old man in his room, had returned and watched with pride his loved one as, straight and lithe, she climbed the ladders, bearing her burden to the castle above. But little this seemed to her, born and bred upon the castle walls. The very infants crawled from ledge to ledge, and seldom one fell in their endeavors to reach the heights. Custom seemed to endow them with the agility of a monkey, and the mothers seldom troubled themselves about the dangers that met their faltering steps at every turn.

“Well, Gazelle,” he cried, “the dances

are finished, and I have received much praise for my services; perchance the tribe will give you to me as a reward, in spite of Thundercloud."

"Ah! happy I should be were it so," she murmured, and passing him with smiling face she sought her aged father.

CHAPTER X.

WISDOM lay upon the raised platform at the side of the room, and but for the rise and fall of his chest would seem to have departed this life. His strength had been much drawn upon that day, for in his excitement he had striven to rise and dance, only to fall back impotent in his weakness, while his soul revolted at his want of power.

Gazelle approached and gently called him, but he hardly spoke in answer to her. "You are much worse, father. I shall call Serpent, the wise medicine man, to you."

She left the room in quest of him. On her way she met Willow, who, seeing her anxious face, inquired the wherefore; and on her telling of her father's change for

the worse, said she would tend him during her absence.

Willow entered the low doorway, and stooping over the chief, uttered a word of endearment, at which he opened his eyes. Upon seeing the crouching figure he said: "Is that you, Willow?"

"Yes," replied the woman. "I shall watch here while Gazelle seeks Serpent, for you are very weak to night."

"Yes, Willow, I feel that I shall never see again the rising sun. The great spirit calls me to him, and soon I must obey. I am glad you are here, for in your care I shall place Gazelle, since she, poor girl, has no mother. Save her, I pray you, from Thundercloud, who, when I am gone, will endeavor to wed her. Call the tribe to her help, and perchance they will assist my daughter when I am dead. Antelope is her choice and mine and only the fear of Thundercloud prevents me from wedding them

at once. Ah! what is this sensation? My feet grow cold, and a mist comes before me. What is it? Call Gazelle! call——”

Willow rushed to the open, calling Gazelle, who approached, accompanied by Serpent. Serpent pushed by and kneeling beside the dying man, poured some fluid down his throat, and then vigorously twirled a noisy rattle. Gazelle crouched on the other side, but though her father smiled upon her, he was beyond speaking.

Slower and slower still the breath of the dying man was drawn. Soon the rattle in his throat bespoke an early dissolution. With one long gasp the tired soul left the wornout body, and the limbs of the old chief straightened out in death.

Shrieks rent the air, and soon the tribe had gathered together to hear that their old chief, the great Wisdom, had surely passed away. Then began the women to chant the death wail, and the children,

hearing the dismal dirges, joined in with their pitiful cries, until the night air was filled with the mourning of the tribe.

Thundercloud and Antelope had both hurried to the chief's room, but Gazelle would see no one in her grief, and crouched with dust-covered head hidden in her clothing, as she bowed over her father's dead form.

Thundercloud ordered the body to be decorated for a chief's burial, and the old women surrounded the corpse as they diligently prepared it for the last rites. The next day a convention of the tribe was called, and after much discussion among the men it was decided to give the body separate burial in the castle walls.

A small cave was found in the burial room and this was enlarged by skilled workmen, who filled every crevice with carefully prepared adobe, until a small room was formed, and the floor leveled

to support the body. All was in readiness for the last sad rites.

In the meantime amid much grief and wailing the body of the chief had been prepared for burial. His hair was carefully combed, and his body cleansed and oiled. His jewels were placed upon him and then in one hand his favorite bow and most valued arrows were placed, while the other grasped his battle-hammer, the one that Thundercloud so much envied his possession of. His turquoise jewels and valuables were collected in readiness, and placed in small plates made of willow, while plates of meal and ears of corn were prepared for his journey to the regions of bliss.

Then Thundercloud, Antelope and the important men of the tribe, were selected to bear him to his tomb, where the bowlders stood in readiness to wall up the body. Loudly the women wailed and sobbed, though Gazelle was silent,

and only her pale face and swollen eyelids expressed her woe as the body of the chief was borne to its last resting-place.

It was placed in a kneeling position facing the rising sun, as he grasped his weapons of defense. Everything being in readiness, Serpent uttered some guttural sentences and signed to the builders to wall up the opening. Then began a tornado of sound as 'mid shrieks and wails the open space was filled in and nothing but the mortar and stone remained to view. Inexpressible was the grief of Gazelle as she lay prone before her father's tomb. Yet none dared touch her in her grief until, at last, the shades of night drew on, when Willow compelled her to leave her position on the ground.

No food had been eaten by her since her father's death, and she seemed very weak and fragile. Willow produced some cornmeal bread and urged the girl

to eat, which at last she did with great reluctance, for her spirit was broken, and she seemed to have lost all desire even of living. Her father, the parent she adored as equal to the gods, was gone from her, and she was left alone to mourn him.

Antelope even seemed denied her, for would not Thundercloud insist upon her becoming his bride, now he was all-powerful in the tribe?

She longed to be lying beside her father, safe from the troubles of this world, which seemed to her to be more than she could bear. Why was she ever born? Was life worth living without her beloved father?

Thus she mused as she mourned alone in her room. "Gazelle!" sounded a well-known voice, and Antelope was beside her. Taking her hands in his, he poured words of sympathy into her ears, until her woe seemed softened and she

found herself listening with pleasure to his gentle voice.

“Let us flee from the castle, and in my village we shall be safe from harm.”

“But how shall we escape when so many will be watching our coming and going?”

“The gods will help us. I have everything prepared to leave. The bearers are waiting, being now camped 'neath the cottonwoods, in readiness to depart.”

Suddenly Willow came hurriedly in, and informed them that Thundercloud drew near. Gazelle sank in alarm to her couch, while Antelope, erect and stern, drew nearer his loved one as though to guard her from some attack. Thundercloud entered through the low doorway, and in the dim light, stood as though desiring to locate the different occupants. On noting Antelope standing erect, he nodded in recognition, though his face

was stern and his brow contracted as he recognized in him a possible rival.

At last he saw Gazelle upon the floor and his face softened as he turned toward her.

"Sorry I am, Gazelle, that this woe has descended upon you. For your father, Wisdom, was well beloved by me, and but for him, my ignorance would be great in the management of the tribe. Now he has gone from us and you are left alone; therefore have I come to ask you to be my bride, for I still love you fondly. I, as the leader and father of the tribe, can do what seems best for the people, and it is my wish to save you trouble and grief."

"I can never marry you, Thundercloud, never."

Thundercloud turned to Antelope, his eyes glittering and his whole form enraged.

"Have you, dog of a trader, have you

torn her from me? Do you dare beard me in my own castle, and among my own people? Have you no desire to return to your own tribe? And must I cast your carcass forth to feed the coyotes?"

Gazelle sprang to her feet. "Is that the way you treat the stranger in your lodge, and must my father's friend be doomed the instant life passes from his body? Walled in his tomb though he be, he would tear the surrounding prison were he to know such things could happen."

"Peace, Gazelle, Thundercloud knows not that Wisdom gave you to me ere he died, and that by every right you belong to me."

"You shall not have her! For death alone shall rob me of her. "Ho, Arrow! Ho, Rainstorm! seize this trader and imprison him securely; guard him with your lives, braves. We soon shall see who weds the fair Gazelle."

Suddenly Willow stood up, and turning to the clustering men whom the call had drawn together, cried to them:

"Wisdom ere he died said if Thundercloud compels my daughter to wed him call upon the tribe to help her for the sake of their old chief. For the sake of the old man who safely led them across the desert, fought long and bravely for them, and even received his mortal injuries in defense of the sleeping tribe."

A low murmur of approval rose from the men and Thundercloud saw that the time was not quite ripe for the accomplishment of his purpose.

Turning to Antelope again, who had quietly listened to the speech of Willow with a look of disdain upon his face, Thundercloud said:

"Southern trader, three suns hence you must be on your way to your home, or else I shall call upon the tribe to cast

you forth, with no remorse for any peril that may assail you."

Then facing Gazelle, a look of mingled love and hate passed over his countenance as, with a low obeisance, he swept from the room, followed by his listening braves, who, now that their chief opposed the trader, turned from him as the people will when their leader wills it. Gazelle, with a sob of agony, threw herself into the arms of her beloved, and said: "My father dead, will they rob me of my lover? What shall I do to save you? For now I see his purpose, and that he has determined that you shall die. Oh, why did you ever come here? All this danger would have been spared you had you never seen me."

"What the gods will, must be, and I am here."

"You must leave at once," she said.

"Never, unless you flee with me, for all is in readiness."

"I cannot cause your death, for that it surely means. Thundercloud and the tribe would follow even to your own village in pursuit of me. Leave me, Antelope, and I will think it o'er. Taking the girl in his strong arms, he pressed kiss upon kiss upon her upturned face, so sad, and tear-stained, then left with drooping form the beloved Gazelle.

She threw herself upon the floor and thought till everything seemed blurred and far away. Soon the tired maiden slept, and for a time her troubles were gone. Sleep, wondrous sleep, but for thee the world would have nothing for mankind but care, dark, dull care. The first dim light in the eastern sky had scarcely appeared when Gazelle awoke to her grief and sorrow.

She must save Antelope at any cost, and it seemed to her that she should flee away, and all would be well. Quietly rising, she left her room and climbed to

the ground without being seen by anyone, for all appeared to be wrapt in sleep.

Slowly she crept up the cañon until she came to a spot where she often went to dream away the time.

Immense cedars cast a dark shadow, and climbing to a granite cliff she sat down to muse, with no thought of the danger with which she was surrounded. The night scavengers had sought their rocky dens and the early birds were beginning to chirp preparatory to betaking themselves in search of food. She heard a rustling in the leaves behind her. Turning quickly she saw a savage face glaring at her between the branches. Forgetful of her desire to escape Thundercloud she rose to shriek for help, when the savage sprung upon her and threw her to the ground. Pressing his hand upon her mouth he called for help, and soon a dozen men stood around.

The men had their warpaint smeared

upon face and body. A small band was round their waist, while eagle feathers decked their hair and moccasins covered their feet.

They gathered together in the dim shade, and attempted to question Gazelle, but she could not understand them.

At last the young man who had secured her, and who seemed a chief among them, spoke to two of the braves and she was hurried away in spite of all her struggles. She was led some distance, where a camp had been formed, and a small fire still burned, hidden by some high cliffs. She remembered that this was the spot where shelter had been obtained during the great thunderstorm, and looming in the darkness the torn and ragged tree which had seemed to Sunray like Wisdom raised its trunk to the sky above in warning.

How she longed for her father, who

she knew would ere this have been in pursuit of the enemy.

Her guards watched her closely, and prevented her leaving any trail, as they savagely dragged her along. They seemed to be overjoyed at the captive that was taken, and laughed and joked as they climbed the rocky mountains.

She soon found that they were taking her to their village, which by signs she discovered was many miles from the cañon. In spite of her suffering, for the heat of the midday sun was still severe, they journeyed along without stopping, and though she often tried to rest, they forced her on with blows of their arrows as they struck her across the back. The air began to grow cold, as they still ascended the mountain side, and her breath came in gasps, though the savages seemed to be unaffected by the rarefied air, and leaped from rock to rock with unceasing speed.

Late that evening they reached a lofty peak. The savages pointed to a distant valley, and there she saw, clustered below, a village. The rounded wigwams seemed to be so low that none could live in them, yet she saw the women and children moving about them or stooping over the fire which burned in front of the open entrances.

The braves gave a loud whoop, and immediately the village was in an uproar. Women ran clutching their infants, while the old men rushed for their arms to protect the defenseless families, and the children set up a terrified wail.

But soon they became quiet and expectant, as they saw the two braves climbing down the mountain, leading their captive. As they entered the village, the women drew near, and upon seeing a cliff dweller, raised a chorus of abuse as they pushed and pulled the poor girl.

The braves dragged her, bruised and torn from the scrambling women and led her before an old man who examined her closely as she sunk terrified and worn-out to the ground.

The old chief spoke a few words of her language, and as she looked up, seemed to be filled with surprise. For he called aloud for some woman to come to him.

Soon approached a very old woman, who with gray hair, and bent form, seemed hardly able to walk. She held in her hand a long stick, which assisted her as she came forward.

The chief said: "Take this girl to your wigwam and keep her for your son, for so he desires, having captured her from the castle of the cliff dwellers. This is a valuable prize and you must watch her with care."

The old woman seized her hand and led her to her wigwam.

CHAPTER XI.

THE old woman tottered along in front of her, muttering to herself as she turned over the rocks in her way with the stout stick she carried, and peering upon the hollow places, she searched for any living insect which she might use for food.

Gazelle was filled with disgust at her actions, and at last said: "Why do you eat such food as you are seeking for? The cliff dwellers would never eat so disgustingly."

"That I know, maiden; for I was once a cliff dweller and lived happy with my husband and little daughter; but many, many moons have passed and gone since that time. See these shrunken limbs, worn out with the work and hardships I have suffered, and bent and old I am be-

fore my time, with the troubles I have had."

She turned toward a wickiup as she spoke, which was hardly high enough to admit a human being.

In front a hollow place had been scooped in the ground, and here a fire burned dim and low. Close by a heap of broken sticks lay piled and scattered round a few earthen plates which had been used for cooking were thrown. "Here is my home, and here you must remain until my son returns from his attack upon the cliff dwellers."

"Why do you attack the cliff dwellers? Have we ever harmed your tribe?"

"Look out upon this village and see the comfort and plenty with which it is supplied. Do you wonder that our tribe attacks your riches? But you are faint, my daughter and I chatter like a child," she said as Gazelle fell back upon the ground unable to sit any longer.

With the gentle care of a mother she tended on her, giving her food to eat from her scanty store, until the poor girl became somewhat stronger, for she soon could murmur some few words of thanks.

"Whence do you come?" at last questioned the old woman. "A cliff dweller I know you are by your speech and clothing, but from what tribe do you come?"

"My name is Gazelle, and my father was Wisdom, the chief of the Castle of Hills, but we were driven hence and have settled near here."

The old woman raised herself on hearing the name of Wisdom and stared at her with a scared look upon her wrinkled face.

"Wisdom?" she said, "who was your mother?"

"Dancing-feet was my mother, but she was carried off many years ago by savages, and we have never seen her since."

With a wild scream the old woman seized the girl in her arms and began frantically to rock her to and fro. "My daughter! My daughter! Gazelle! brought to me again. Now I understand why I seemed to know you. You are myself as a girl before my captivity, and like your mother carried into savagery. Poor, poor, Gazelle! But I shall save you. You shall not suffer the pains your mother passed through in this terrible tribe. Never shall I forget my terror when the hands of the savage clutched me as I stooped to fill my *ojah* and muffling my face, bore me from you, my child. I thought that your father would surely follow and save me, for often I strove to leave traces as we traveled, but I was too carefully watched, and ever as I did so they were effaced.

"How many days we traveled over the wilderness I know not, for I had lost all thought of anything save my child, and

under the blue canopy of heaven I laid thinking of my babe weeping for its mother, and refusing to be comforted. I could not weep, for as the time went on all hope left me. At last they led me into the village, and placed me under the care of an old woman such as I, but cruel as an evil spirit. Often I wished myself dead, but death would not come, and soon I bore the blows and jibes without flinching, and my past life seemed buried in oblivion.

“Then was I married to the chief of the tribe. He was a tall, handsome man, but I hated him beyond telling until a son was born to us and my buried love took root, and with increasing strength the little puny life delivered to my care grew tightly round my heart. I could hardly let him leave me. The other women laughed, for their children wandered through the woods hunting the wild animals and suffered no harm.

Why should my boy get in trouble? I taught him all the knowledge I had received from my people and much wiser was he than the other boys. He grew on apace. At last his father led his tribe to battle and he returned no more, for he was slain facing the enemy, and his scalp waves a trophy of bravery hung to some other's girdle.

"Time will not permit me, daughter, to relate all the woes I suffered. As my boy grew to manhood, and he became a leader of our braves I loved him more and more. None can conceive my grief when he came one day and said: 'I must lead the tribe against the cliff dwellers.' I tried in vain to prevent him, but he said that only from them was food in plenty to be obtained, and at last one day he led his braves away to battle against my people. I felt it not, for my feelings were warped by my life here. And no surprise I felt when called to escort a

girl to my home. Only one more to suffer as I had; what mattered one more or less? My son was victorious then, I thought. On seeing you, I seemed to know you as one I had met before, but I dared not show surprise, for then some other woman would have had you in her care, so I led you to my wickiup to find in you my long lost daughter Gazelle."

Gazelle had drawn away from her filled with wonder. Could this old woman be her mother? She, whom her father had clothed with the beauty of a lover's eyes seemed now to have no trace of that beauty left. And yet her eyes beamed with kindness, and in spite of all, Gazelle knew that none but a mother could look so lovingly at her. So at last she threw herself weeping and crying into her mother's arms, then was she soothed by her, who murmured words as she would to an infant crying at her bosom.

"Oh, that my father had lived! How happy would he have been. But, alas, he is dead, my good old father! The sun has set but five times since we bore his dead body to its last resting-place in our castle, where he was walled in by the fast hardening adobe."

"Ah, that I had seen him ere he died," replied Dancing-feet, "but death is escape from pain and grief and I would I were with him. "My son, your brother, was your captor, was he not?"

"I know not; a hideous savage with brawny arms and eyes that gleamed like fire seized me and bore me away to where others waited round, and with commanding voice bade them lead me here. If he indeed be my brother, not much of a cliff dweller do I see in him, with his hideous paint and wild appearance."

"That surely was your brother, Lightning, swift to attack and bring ruin

on his enemies, a brave boy he; I would he had known you, for then no suffering would you have had at his command."

And would he dare to attack the castle defended by our warriors? Did he but know that Thundercloud and—and Antelope will lead the men in pursuit of me, and soon I pray they will appear to carry me to my home—he would have thought well, ere he made the attack."

Dancing-feet said naught. Her heart was divided between her love for both: her daughter the cliff dweller, and her son the savage, who, in spite of all, was her son, her brave and youngest child.

"But who are Thundercloud and Antelope?"

"Thundercloud is the stern chief of the tribe, he who fills my father's place, and brave and strong he is, though I hate him; while Antelope is a handsome stranger from the south, a wealthy trader, the man I love above all others."

“Ah, now I understand.”

“My father gave me to Antelope, but Thundercloud would have forced me to wed him, so I fled to the hills to hide from his power, when your son found me and bore me a captive away.”

“If that is so the fight will be long and savage, and much I fear our men will be driven away and many slain. I trust my son escapes the fight, but I greatly fear that in the front attack he will meet his death, as his father before him fell.”

The old woman bent over the hot embers and crooned a lullaby, while Gazelle sat near unable to sleep, though worn out with her journey. She could not help thinking of Antelope, perhaps dead ere this, for well she knew that he would follow her or die in the attempt. But soon the howl of the coyotes seemed to die away in the distance, and resting on the ground, under her covering of skins, she slept.

Long Dancing-feet sat and watched her, and who can tell the thoughts and longings of the poor woman, as this link connecting her past and present life lay sleeping near her? All the degradation of her present time loomed up in more vivid coloring as she noted the clear cut features of her daughter and thought, "I, too, was like her; beautiful as a flower, and now——"

The stars shone clear and bright above her, and all nature slept, ere she laid herself down, after placing some fresh sticks on the fast dying fire.

Gazelle awoke the next morning to find her mother moving around busy in the duties of the morning meal, and almost she thought that Willow sat near as she heard the steady grinding of the wild seeds on the *matatas*.

Soon the other women began to cluster round, while the children with their usual cruelty, heaped abuse and names

upon the defenseless girl. But soon Dancing-feet, with vigorous hands, dispersed them all and drove the women forth with harsh words. "This girl is in my care, sent to me by the chief; how dare you molest her?" she cried.

She gazed round her as the day became more bright, the mist rolling away from the lower ground, and saw more clearly that the village was placed upon a rising mound, though mountains reared their height around. A running stream close by went purling and rippling over well worn bowlders, tossed there by the storm of other times; while the thin blue smoke around showed that the women sat cooking their cakes at the blazing fires.

On a tall mountain near a form stood straight and motionless, guarding the camp from the sudden, wild attacks of a stealthy enemy.

Rugged and bleak seemed the whole

country, and she wondered what the people found to keep life in their bodies with. Yet all seemed happy as they wandered hither and thither in their ceaseless search for food.

Little she wondered that the graneries of the cliff dwellers were a sore temptation for such poverty, and greatly she pitied her poor mother, doomed by her captivity to such want and labor.

Yet she never thought that she herself might suffer the same. It was only for a time it seemed to her and Antelope with the braves would descend yon mountain and bear her safely home.

The days went by, and still no help came. Gazelle began to grow thin and wan. Why did her lover not appear and carry her home in safety?

She wandered round the hills with her mother and soon her love grew, for the mother's care of her touched her heart and she returned it with interest. Danc-

ing-feet talked of her old tribe and heard with pleasure of the loving care of Willow for her daughter. "Yes," she said, "Willow and I were very fond of each other, for she it was who helped me in my household duties when first I went to the castle. Your father wooed me in my pueblo home, where care and trouble never seemed to come."

The men employed their time in cultivating the corn and melons, while the women busied themselves in household duties, sweeping the floors clean of all dust, weaving the linen cloth, or tying the corn in bunches to hang to the roof; carefully sorting the red corn from the yellow, for that must be set aside for the next year's sowing.

Dancing-feet said to Gazelle: "Your father came on a visit to learn the laws, and soon we loved each other fondly. My people did not wish me to travel to the north, but hand in hand we trod the

devious trail until we reached the Castle of Hills and received the welcome of the tribe; for was he not the chief?"

Gazelle listened to the tale, then said: "Antelope, he comes from the self same village; his mother knew you, mother dear. Yes, for she remembered your leaving your home and that they never heard of you more. You will return with us and live in your old home happy after all the troubles you have passed through. Think of the gurgling brook and the green fields and the quiet of the village as you wait to receive your last call to go to my father."

"But my son, I cannot leave him, and the tribe will prevent my leaving them, for I am still a captive."

Thus they talked, and when at night sleep overtook them, they slumbered as though no cares could ever come upon them.

Many days had passed and still no

news of the braves had been received. The old men began to grow anxious and many meetings were held to discuss their mode of action.

At last one old chief said: "Let us send a messenger; perchance some danger has o'ertaken them, and they need help from the tribe."

So a young man was chosen from the youths and after many admonitions he was sent to seek the braves who must surely still be camped before the castle, vainly attempting to enter the walls by scaling the heights. Some days after the sentinel on the mountain signaled the approach of the braves, and soon a number of men clustered together were seen descending the mountain side.

They seemed to bearing something, and as they approached it was seen to be a litter, on which lay extended a chief of the tribe.

The braves were downcast and uttered

few words to the women, who ran toward them.

Dancing-feet had not noticed the approaching men, for she had been busily cooking at the fire, until, hearing the many steps, she looked up and saw the litter.

Struggling to her feet, she tottered forward, filled with forebodings of trouble. When the men stopped near her wickiup and gently laid the litter upon the ground, the old woman threw herself upon the body, for extended in death lay her son, Lightning.

Gazelle stood quietly by and gazed upon the livid face of the chief. Gone was all his fierceness and a smile of joy seemed to extend over the lips, which the poor old mother was kissing as she wept.

But soon she drew back, for little time had women to spend in grief upon one whose troubles were o'er; and where

famine and war was bearing men to destruction daily, grief did not last long.

Then turning to the surrounding braves, she cried: "How came he by his death?"

CHAPTER XII.

THE men drew back, for as Dancing-feet stood facing them, with raised stick, she seemed about to throw herself upon them in a wild attack.

At last one of them spoke and said: "How can we tell the sad tale of our chief's death? For with grief are we filled at his loss."

"He is dead," said his mother; "relate to his people his deeds of bravery and bring some joy to a mother's sad heart."

Again the voice of the brave was heard as he recounted his tale.

"After the capture of the maiden by Lightning, and she was sent to the village with her guards, we were ordered by him to return to our hiding-places and he sought the point whence he could view

the castle walls as soon as the day broke.

“The sun had hardly gilded the mountain tops when three or four men scrambled hurriedly down the ladders, and walking a little distance out, began to scan closely the ground, until one gave a cry, when the rest hurried up and seemed to follow some trail. This led them up the cañon toward the spot where Lightning lay hid.

“So intent were they upon following the trail which, it seems, was that of the young girl, that they walked unawares into our ambush. While examining the marks she had left when sitting on the ground, Lightning gave the signal of attack and we all sprung upon them.

“We were ten to three, and all fled excepting one man, the chief of the castle, whose way was barred by Lightning. He bravely sprang upon him and locked in mortal combat they rolled down a steep incline.

“The rest we slew excepting one man, whose strength was surprising and on his reaching the castle walls we were met by such a flight of arrows that we stopped to escape them.

“In the meantime the two chiefs were fighting madly and their naked bodies writhed and twisted, each striving to get in a death blow. The muscles of their backs stood out in huge bands and the perspiration poured from them in streams. Their breath hissed through their clinched teeth; yet neither could give the blow that each desired.

“Presently the chief of the cliff dwellers strove to throw himself upon Lightning; his foot was pressed against a rock that seemed firm as the cliff itself, but as he pressed with might and main it suddenly gave way, to roll crashing lower down, and the chief fell back upon the ground. Lightning saw his opportunity and raising himself, forced his obsidian

knife deep into the chief's quick-panting chest. His flashing eyes grew dim and dark as he laid limp and still in death.

"Lightning stood upright, trembling in every limb, for it had been a terrible fight, and but for the slipping rock the chief of the cliff dwellers would have overcome him in the fight.

"With quick circling stroke he stripped the scalp from his fallen enemy and tied the hair to his girdle string, then proudly strode to where his men stood to welcome him. 'Almost had the brave taken my scalp, for my strength had left me when he slipped and gave me the opportunity. Who is this brave man?'

"As he spoke a green bough was seen waving before the walls, and on answering the signal a number of the tribe desired to speak with our chief. Quickly they approached and thus they spoke:

" 'Brave chief,' they cried, 'Thunder-

cloud, our chief, has been slain. Give us his body that we may give him the burial he so much deserves.'

" 'If the man that fought with me be your brave chief receive his body,' cried Lightning, 'for never fought I so stern a battle for my life.'

"The two men sadly formed a litter from cedar trees and gently placing the body upon it, bore it slowly to the castle, where it was received with the weeping and wailing of the tribe."

Gazelle could hardly believe that Thundercloud was dead, that stern man whose will seemed made of iron; and yet, like her father, he had passed away. But was Antelope safe? For well she knew that he also had been searching for her with Thundercloud. One man had escaped; that must have been Antelope, and he would yet save her.

"Lightning was overjoyed at the death of Thundercloud, for now, he thought, the

tribe will be overwhelmed and become an easy prey to our attack.

“Quietly they rested the livelong day, and well they watched the castle, until early the next morning, Lightning gave the order for an attack upon its walls. The men crept from tree to tree and shrub to shrub, carefully hiding themselves behind every stump and log, which became more difficult as they drew nearer, for the ground had been carefully cleared by the cliff dwellers.

“With one wild rush they attempted to climb the cliff and some reached the foot of the walls. But the cliff dwellers were not asleep, and soon rocks and bowlders were poured upon our heads with crushing force. Lightning still strove to climb higher, for he led the men bravely, but finding himself alone in the attack he returned to where the men had retired. Then began the arrows to fly from the walls, and deadly was the

aim, for some of our men fell pierced by them.

“Lightning ordered our men to retire and soon a council of war was called. Some wished to leave, for it seemed impossible to take so strong a fastness, but the chief said: ‘That will avail us nothing, for we have the girl and they will surely follow us if we retire.’

“ ‘Let us make a night attack and fire burning arrows into the castle. This will cause them fear, then we shall make an attack terrible and strong and the castle will be ours.’

“All that day were we preparing for the attack. In our last attempt Lightning had seen what seemed a weak spot and this was to be cut into with our axes as soon as we reached the place.”

“Nervously the men waited for the sinking of the sun, for that was the time agreed upon for the attempt, and soon as the sun sunk to rest, Lightning was

leading us with stealthy steps toward the enemy.

“Never shall I forget this wild assault. We all reached the foot of the cliffs, when a signal was given and the arrows lit at a burning brand which had been carried hidden beneath some skins, but lately torn from the slain animal, were fired, forming a shower of fire which poured upon the castle walls. Again the rocks came crashing to the ground, carrying many a brave to his death below. But still we struggled on and Lightning had reached the spot he desired. Raining blow upon blow on the soft clay, soon a hole was made, but here the cliff dwellers stood ready to meet the attack, and Lightning, finding himself deserted by his men, for the bowlders had driven them away, was forced to give way and return to his braves.

“Torn and wounded, for a rock had struck him upon the brow, he stamped,

and roared at the cowardice of his men, but no human being could withstand the shower of rocks, and many lay slain from their crushing blows. Around these the braves sadly stood.

“Yet Lightning would not give way, but camped beside the stream, thinking to starve the cliff dwellers from their retreat.

“Some days we remained, the men becoming more despondent as the time went on and no notice was taken of them by the cliff dwellers. Some of the braves tore down the ditches that had been so carefully made and burned the hollow trees they used for carrying the water until all was ruined.

“One day some movement was seen upon the walls and Lightning decided an attack was about to be made.

“ ‘They must require water,’ he said, ‘and we shall repel their attack. Their store of water has been used and the

people must have more.' Carefully he placed us behind the rocks and hiding-places to await the coming of the tribe.

"Soon with a wild rush they came, led by one man who seemed taller than the rest, and who cheered them on. Some bore water-bottles upon their backs; these tarried behind the braves that led the way. The castle walls were covered with women and children, and mingled with them the old men stood calling to the braves and urging them to the attack.

"As soon as they drew near enough we met them with a flight of arrows that brought some of the men to the ground with a dull thud, but still the others came undaunted and soon a hand to hand conflict was being waged.

"Lightning, with the bravery of his father, sought out the leader of the cliff dwellers. This man swerved neither to the left nor right until they stood face to

face, then bending his bow he drove his arrow with great strength; but Lightning sprung aside and the arrow passed by to stick quivering into the trunk of a cottonwood behind.

“Then in a hand to hand conflict each strove to slay the other, raining blow upon blow each on the other and soon the blood flowed in streams from their wounds.

“Lightning seemed weaker than usual, for he had not recovered from the wounds he had received at the castle, and slowly he began to give way before the stronger man, when a blow of a stone ax delivered with awful force crushed his skull, and he fell limp and dead upon the ground.

“The cliff dwellers gave a yell and our men slowly retreated to the other side of the stream still unconquered. Two of us had seized his body and carried it with us, the braves still firing arrows at

the men as they stooped to fill their bottles. With many a wild jump the shrieking braves returned to their castle with the water obtained to be greeted by the shrill cries of the women and children who had seen their prowess.

"Sadly we sat round our campfires, and at last we determined to return to our village, since Lightning lay dead before us.

"None can understand our grief as we bore him over the hills. He had so joyfully led us; and at last we reached our home to bear him to you, Dancing-feet, and lay him before your home."

The brave stopped speaking and drooped his head, while the rest acquiesced in his narrative with many a grunt.

Gazelle clasped her mother's withered hand as tearless she gazed upon her son's dead face.

The old woman turned toward her and

said: "Why is it thus? Behold a daughter gained and, lo, a son is lost to me."

The tribe scowled upon the girl, for was she not a hated cliff dweller? and many would have delighted to tear her limb from limb, but Dancing-feet waved them back and said: "This is my daughter. You would not hurt the chief's own sister, now he is dead?"

All that night she sat beside the body, while the tribe prepared the mound for his burial.

Earth was carried from the river banks by the tending women to where a place had been set aside for the burial.

There the chief's body was carried, while his implements of war and ornaments were placed beside him. At his feet was laid the cooked deer meat and other food to help him reach the happy hunting grounds. Then the soil was heaped upon the body until a mound was formed high above the dead chief. In

the meantime the women wailed and howled, while the men danced and chanted the funeral dirge in honor of a great chief.

Gazelle gazed upon the madness and debauchery which followed. She thought of her dead father walled up in their castle and wondered if Antelope would come to her rescue, or whether, like her mother, she was doomed to this life with a savage tribe.

Poor Dancing-feet seemed crushed with grief and woe, for Lightning had been her one joy, and he alone had been able to bring some brightness into a life of hardship and care.

She turned to Gazelle for love in this hour of trial, who strove to soften her trouble with soft words until she became more resigned and began again to go about her daily labors, accompanied by her daughter.

What Gazelle would have done with-

out her mother it is hard to say; for it was she who raised her drooping spirits with hopes and told her that she would save her from the tribe for her own true love.

"And you will return with us, mother, dear?"

"Ay, child, for I could not live alone with the tribe, now my son is gone, though perchance they would attempt to slay me did I try to leave them."

Gazelle had wandered one day alone upon the hills, picking the nuts and berries from the shrubs and loading her back with sticks for the warming fire, when, looking over a craggy cliff that ragged and spiked, raised its way before her, she saw a lion stretched beneath a cave. Two cubs were playing with the mother, one lying upon its back was clasping its mother's face between its paws, while the other, straddled on her back, was vainly endeavoring to shake

her body as it gripped the skin of her neck in its mouth. The great cat was purring with enjoyment and love and did not notice the woman looking down upon this family episode.

Gazelle, terror-stricken, drew back and with stealthy steps retraced her way to a more frequented part of the country, thankful that she had escaped the grave danger which had threatened her.

On telling her mother of her danger that night she was surprised at the terror depicted in her face as she clasped her to her breast.

"Oh, be careful, daughter, for did I lose you now I should be lost indeed without you. I could not live. My love is poured upon you alone now. The tribesmen, too, are beginning to murmur. Some wish to slay you as the cause of the chief's death, while others would take you to wife. Were one to meet you alone upon the hills I dare not say what

might be your fate. Do not wander abroad without your mother to guide and keep you safe from harm.

Gazelle was astounded, and longed still more intensely for the arrival of Antelope, of which she had no doubt, though he was long in coming.

She wondered why he had been delayed, and knew not that even now he had set out with a party of braves to seek his bride across the treacherous hills which hid the savage trails securely, though they searched each cañon and each ragged side.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE tribe had held a meeting in order to elect a chief in place of Lightning. The newly elected decided that a feast should be held, at which several of the young men who wished to attain the rank of braves, would pass through the ordeal required.

The tribe made all the preparations they could, for their larder was small, and little they had to feast upon. So a number of the braves set out on a hunting expedition to a distant spring, where deer were wont to come, in order to quench their thirst.

The hunters reached their destination one afternoon, and found many traces of deer and other animals in the mud around. So they hid themselves

behind some rocks that bordered the spring, and patiently waited the coming of the deer. The wind was blowing toward them from the spring, giving the animals little chance of scenting their enemy.

The afternoon began to wane, and the sun to sink behind the western hills, when a small herd of antelopes approached the watering-place. They were led by a majestic buck, who, with raised head sniffed the breeze, and slowly drew nearer and nearer the water.

The Indians had their bows in readiness, but did not shoot until a more favorable chance could be had. At last the deer turned to watch the herd come forward, and in doing so exposed the whole of his side.

Immediately, twang went the bows and four or five arrows stood quivering in the side of the buck. Giving a spring straight into the air, with all four legs

drawn together, the animal fell dead upon the ground, while from his head stretched near the spring in death poured a stream which ensanguined the flowing water. The rest of the herd sprang away in a mad race for life, followed by a flight of arrows which missed their mark.

The Indians were overjoyed at their good fortune, and hanging the animal upon a long pole, carried it to their camping place.

Here they were received with songs of joy, and the acclamations of the tribe. Soon was the skin carefully drawn from the body of the deer, which was divided into small pieces, to be cooked upon the fires.

But before commencing the feast, the rites of bravery had to be performed, and three young men with backs bare and quivering were drawn up in readiness for the terrible ordeal. The war-

riors, with all the paraphernalia of war-paint upon their faces and feathers in their hair, stood round a pole, to which were attached long ropes with hooks tied to the end.

Then came the medicine man with howl and leap toward the young boys, who, stern and immovable, awaited the punishment which entitled them to be called braves.

The warriors began a mournful song as they danced around, while the women and children shrieked in unison. Amid the greatest excitement, Gazelle saw two huge gashes made upon the bare backs, and the cruel hooks inserted beneath the skin. Then the youths, in spite of their agony, began a wild dance, yelling and jumping with might and main. Their mouths frothed as they worked themselves into frenzy, and they pulled and tore against the restraining hooks, until one with mighty effort broke the hook

through, and joined the circling men a member of the order of braves. The second man also with yell and shriek, succeeded in the attempt, while the blood poured in streams from the torn flesh.

But the third, a young boy almost too young for such torture, seemed unable to force himself apart, and at last fell fainting, hanging from the hook.

Gazelle felt sick at heart, as she watched the terrible dance, and wondered what would happen when the dance stopped. The young man was released, and upon consciousness returning, he was led amid much buffoonery to a group of women, who received him with cries of derision. With much laughter he was given over to their care to be a woman, and clothed with the insignia of their sex was doomed to be a slave to them for life. Apart from the men, the butt of the women, it would be

better for him if he had never lived than exist the coward of the tribe.

Gazelle could not join in the wild cries of the women; apart she stood faint and sickened by the horrid spectacle. The men began now to wildly rush around. Some seized the meat cooking at the fire, while others drank of the mescal provided, and soon a scene of wild debauchery began which was beyond description. In this the women joined, receiving the remains of the food as the men cast it aside, humbly from their lords and masters.

Dancing-feet quickly led Gazelle away, for she feared the tribe might seize her in their excitement and kill her.

She lay in the little wickiup, listening to the shouts of the maddened Indians, and fearful that some of them might rush to drag her forth.

The next day all was quiet and the men drew together to talk. The tribe had

almost decided that they would leave their present camping ground, to find a place where more food could be obtained. For here the huntsmen were obliged to travel far away before finding the animals to shoot.

Dancing-feet had heard them discussing the question, and on returning to Gazelle (for she had been out talking with the other old women) she said: "Gazelle, we must not leave this spot if the tribe decides to go, for then Antelope would have no chance of regaining you; while if we remain behind he will surely find us, for he will certainly come across the camp.

"I know of a cave not far from here, which in the course of my wanderings I found, and there we can lie hidden, when the tribe take their departure, and there we can await the coming of our people."

Gazelle was overjoyed at the suggestion, for the thought of continuing her

travels with the wild tribe filled her with alarm, and she said: "Mother, dear, let us seek the place, and lay up a store of food, so that we can wait and not starve in the meantime."

The next day her mother took her to gather nuts and wood, leading her by devious ways over the scrub-covered mountains. She climbed slowly down a rocky cañon through which a tiny stream of water trickled and fell in cascades.

On one side a thick growing grapevine covered the cliffs with entangling tendrils. Pushing them aside, she crawled, followed by Gazelle, until an opening was seen. This they entered and a beautiful cave spread before them.

Their entrance was the signal for a flapping of wings which somewhat frightened Gazelle until she found that hundreds of bats had made the cave their home, and they resented greatly the entrance of any stranger.

Light from above formed upon the stalactites that hung from the roof, where they glittered and shone like silver, forming beauteous shapes such as Gazelle had never seen before.

"Is this not beautiful?" said Dancing-feet. "I found it one day when I followed a tiny rabbit which disappeared in the vine. Nowhere could it be seen when I came upon the opening, and entering, found the cave. I saw the light from above, but too old am I to climb alone, and where it comes from I know not; but crouching near a rock I found the rabbit which I easily caught and carried home.

"None of the tribe know of this cave, and here we shall be safe from them; for when they find we have disappeared they will leave without us."

Daily the women carried some of their small store to the cave to be in readiness for the tribe's departure, which became

more imminent every day. At last one day the chief told them to gather together their belongings, in readiness for the departure. That night Dancing-feet, followed by Gazelle, stole from the camp with their utensils, and traveling in a circle, came to the entrance of the cañon. They carefully obliterated their footprints, and stepping from stone to stone, reached the grapevine.

Gazelle entered first, and Dancing-feet, smoothing the leaves and twigs as she passed through, joined her in the cave.

On a raised portion of the cave they had spread branches of the oak, and over this grass gathered from the hills. With these a couch soft and downy was made.

Gazelle sunk trembling upon her bed, for she had seemed to hear every moment the following braves, but none appeared and she whispered to her mother in delighted tones:

"We are safe! We have escaped them, and soon we shall return to our home in the cliffs."

Several days they remained hidden in the cave, fearful of leaving its sheltering walls. Once indeed they thought they heard the voice of some shouting brave, but it died away in the distance.

At last Dancing-feet said she would see if the tribe had left, and creeping forth, Gazelle was left alone.

Long she waited the return of her mother who seemed to be never coming back, but after some time, which had seemed days to the waiting Gazelle, she heard her voice at the entrance.

"Gazelle!" she cried, "come forth! The tribe has departed and I see no signs of them upon the hills."

Quickly she stooped and crawled through the opening to join her mother in the outer world.

How good it was to feel the warmth of

the sun, poured upon her after her enforced hiding in the bowels of the earth, and how blue the sky seemed—bluer even than her turquoise necklet which still hung around her neck. Her mother, bent and withered, stood near; and she smiled as she saw her daughter's delight upon gaining the open air.

"Come, we shall seek the camping ground, and see if anything remains."

They slowly walked toward the place, and saw the ashes almost warm in the fireplaces, and the trodden ground which led from where one wickiup had been to another.

So intent were they in searching the deserted camp that neither noticed that several men stood upon the summit of a distant hill.

These, upon looking down, and seeing the women alone in the camp, began hurriedly to descend, but one, in jumping from rock to rock, loosened a boulder

and it went crashing to the gulch below.

Dancing-feet turned, and on seeing the men, seized Gazelle by the hand as she rushed as quickly as her feeble limbs would allow toward the cave.

But the pursuing men gained upon them at every step, and soon their voices were heard in the language of the cliff dwellers calling upon them to stop.

They stopped short and soon the men drew near. Who were they?

The tallest of them approached and seeing Gazelle, called loudly in excited tones: "We have found her! We have found her!"

At once she recognized Adobe, the companion of Antelope, who was accompanied by many of her father's braves, whom she recognized. One much older than the rest, scrutinized the old woman closely, when suddenly he cried: "It is Dancing-feet, the wife of Wisdom.

Wonderful! wonderful!" And he fell at her feet, through sheer surprise.

Gazelle turned to Adobe, and in trembling accents asked for Antelope. "Where is he? He is not dead? Surely he is not dead?"

"The sun has set three times since I left the castle at his command, for very sick was the brave Antelope. The struggle with the savage chief had been terrible, and many wounds he received in the fight. Sick unto death he lay fighting the evil spirits, and calling upon you, Gazelle, to come to him. So we set out to seek you in the wilderness, knowing that if you were not found death would surely claim him."

The women led the braves to their cave, where much they wondered at its hidden beauties, and gathering their implements together hurried forth to reach the Castle of Bears ere Antelope died.

Gazelle would hardly give the tired-

out braves time to rest ere she hurried them to return; and overjoyed though they were at the recovery of the women, tired nature could do no more, so they determined to wait until the morrow.

Gazelle could not sleep, as she thought of her lover sick unto death. And restlessly she tossed to and fro as she longed for the day to break.

At last the men began to wake, and having stirred the embers to a blaze, cooked their food for the morning meal.

Soon they were assisting the women up the tall mountains, until they reached the peak, where they turned to look upon the place where both had suffered.

Dancing-feet stood and gazed afar, while tears trickled down her face as she noticed the fresh mound where her dead son lay. Who can tell her thoughts as she left forever the captivity which had been hers so long, to return at last to her own people?

Hurriedly they traveled in their anxiety to reach the castle, and Gazelle would hardly wait to take some needful rest, until early one morning she saw the place where Lightning had captured her and sent her to his mother. She pointed out the place to her mother, who looked sadly on.

As they approached they met members of the tribe running to them, and in the lead came Willow to welcome her Gazelle.

She paused when she saw the old woman, as if uncertain who she was, when she gave a scream of delight; for she recognized in the withered old woman her long lost friend, Dancing-feet. "Dancing-feet!" she cried, and the tribe took up the cry, for her name was familiar to many.

Then clasping Gazelle to her bosom she said: "You have found your mother! Oh would that Wisdom were alive, what joy would have been his lot!"

But Gazelle began to show her anxiety and asked for Antelope with trembling voice.

"He is alive," said Willow, "but very, very sick, and hourly he calls for you as he tosses to and fro.

"Serpent watches him day and night and prays the good sun to bring you to him, else, he says Antelope cannot live."

With blanched cheek Gazelle followed Willow toward the castle and soon was climbing the well known steps and ladder. She noted the place where the savage attack had been made, and soon was stooping at the narrow entrance to Antelope's room.

"The sun be praised," Serpent said when he saw who the newcomer was. "He now will soon be well in spite of the evil spirits."

She threw herself beside the sick man and pressed kiss upon kiss upon the dried, parched lips.

The tossing man stopped his low mutterings as he felt the warm kisses of the maiden, and turning upon his side he seized her hand. His eyes closed and soon the gentle rising and falling of his chest showed that sleep, deep and quiet, held him in her arms.

CHAPTER XIV.

LONG Antelope slept the sleep of a child, and gently Gazelle sat beside him without once moving. Suddenly he opened his eyes and looked around. Astonishment appeared on his face when he saw Gazelle sitting beside him. "Where am I?" he said. His voice was weak, and he hardly spoke above a whisper. "What is the matter with me? My head is dizzy, and I can hardly move. Surely it was a dream that you were lost, Gazelle?"

Gazelle, gently brushed the hair from his forehead with her cool hand, and said: "You must be quiet, for you are very weak, dear."

Dancing-feet had left the castle to seek for herbs, of which she had much

knowledge. Roots to give strength and leaves to cause sleep, she knew them all, and as she entered the room with a bundle of herbs in her arms her daughter stopped speaking.

Antelope looked carelessly at her until Gazelle said: "This is my mother, Dancing-feet, of whom I spoke to you." Then his surprise was beyond describing. "Dancing-feet! I thought she died many years ago. She was carried away, and we thought her dead."

The old woman smiled and busied herself with the herbs till soon she had a tea made ready for Antelope to drink. This he did, though he made many wry faces at the nauseous compound; but it had the effect of making him sleep again with a child's gentle breathing.

Some days had passed and Antelope was gaining strength under the care of Gazelle and her mother, who watched his every movement. Soon the sick man

desired to move out of his dark close rooms, and he was helped by willing hands into the bright sunshine. Glorious to the sick man seemed the light and beauty of the day, and he spread his hands to the bright rays of the sun, with an enjoyment that was childlike in its simplicity.

Then, as he reclined against the wall of the castle, Gazelle told him of all the pain and torture she received during her sojourn with the savages.

Antelope grit his teeth in impotent rage till Gazelle pressed his hand, when he grew quiet again.

"But what did you think, Antelope," she said, "when I did not return to the castle?"

Antelope settled back, leaning against the castle walls, and seeing that he was about to tell her all, Gazelle placed her weaving implement before her, and quickly began to weave the white yucca

cloth as she listened to his story. Antelope watched her as she skillfully passed the threads, one within the other, then slowly he began to speak.

"Willow," at last he said, "sought you that morning in the room and finding no trace of you, rushed to Thundercloud with rage and anger.

" 'Now you see what you have done, driven the child forth to perish in the wilds. I'd scorn to treat a feeble woman so.'

"Thundercloud was stricken dumb, but he quickly called some of his men to him, and I, having heard that you were lost, joined them as they climbed down the castle walls. The sun had just risen, and thin, dark clouds striped the face of the great orb, which was rosy with its morning freshness.

"The men spread out to seek the trail you left and soon Thundercloud called us to him, for he had found the mark of

your moccasins on the sand leading up the cañon.

"We followed them quickly, little anticipating the dangers we were coming to. We mounted a cliff covered with a thick growth of trees, and Thundercloud leading, entered the leafy bower. He was stooping to search the ground, when a cry was heard and a brawny savage threw himself upon the chief. He was followed by many men and we, seeing ourselves powerless to fight, turned to flee, for Thundercloud cried: 'Save yourselves!'

"The pursuing braves fired a flight of arrows which struck down most of our men. But, strange to say, I escaped, and climbed inside the walls safely.

"The whole tribe were rushing hither and thither in fright at the sudden attack, for there were none to take the leadership, until Serpent came to me and called on me to lead the tribe. At last I

accepted, though much against my will, until I thought of you carried away, and how powerless I was without warriors to assist me in attacking the captors.

"I sent two men to gain the body of the chief, waving the green bough of truce from the walls.

"The body was received, amid the wails and tears of the women, as they grouped around the dead man.

"The stern chief's face seemed placid as a child's as he lay extended in death, and as a tribute to his bravery, I could not prevent myself from bending in obeisance to the now empty covering of his soul, although he had done me so much harm."

"Poor Thundercloud!" murmured Gazle; "he was a brave chief and my father loved him well. Perchance they wander together as they did on this earth over the soul's happy hunting grounds."

"Little time," continued Antelope,

"had we to spend in mourning, for our scouts gave us warning that the savages were about to attack the castle.

"The bowlders and rocks were collected ready to repel any attempt at scaling the walls, and the marksmen stood with bent bows ready to fire upon the braves as they ran. The shades of evening were drawing on when Adobe pointed out shadows, gliding from bush to bush; then suddenly a light was seen, and a flight of burning arrows fell behind the ramparts. The men quickly seized the arrows and cast them forth as the attack began. Bravely they climbed the cliffs, many slipping and falling to the ground only to make another attempt, until some rock crushed them still and lifeless. But in spite of all their bravery our men fought well and they were forced to retired discomfited.

"For days they haunted the banks of the stream, until the water stored in our

ojahs grew less and less, and the men began to think that something must be done, and that right soon.

"Then we called a meeting of the elders and it was decided that we should make a sudden attack in order to obtain water from the spring.

"The women began to wail, but what else could be done?—for were our water gone death only remained to us.

"So a number were given the water bottles to carry, and descending the ladders we rushed upon the hidden enemy. They met us with a flight of arrows that laid many brave men low, and then stood up to meet us.

"Soon I saw the chief of the savages standing before me, and filled with frenzy I threw myself upon him. Long we struggled striving to give the death blow until weak we grew with our wrestling. Suddenly he seemed to become faint, so throwing myself against him, I rained

blow upon blow upon his head until he sank lifeless to the ground. The warriors set up a cry of victory, and the savages retired to the other side of the stream, sullen, yet unconquered. We quickly returned to the castle with our bottles filled, ready now to meet a lengthy siege.

"No further attack was made, so I sent out scouts to see if the enemy remained; for I felt sick and weak after my struggle with the savage.

"He had struck me on the head, tearing the scalp with the cruel blow, and soon a heat and weakness I cannot describe overcame me.

"Night and day I dreamed of you, Gazelle."

Gazelle turned and smiled into his eyes as she touched his hand.

"And you alone seemed in my mind. Serpent came to me, giving me teas and potions, but weaker still I grew, until

he looked sad and woebegone. I heard him tell Willow that only your presence would save me. I knew no more, until waking one day I saw you sitting beside me, and my heart was filled with joy. But how you came I knew not, for the terrible time we had seemed only a dream."

His wonder grew still more when Gazelle described how the chief he slew was her mother's son, and told that he had sent her to be guarded by her own mother, though the savage knew it not.

She told how Dancing-feet could hardly believe that she saw her daughter again in life and that only on the death of her son, would she ever consent to attempt to leave the savage tribe to return to her home. She had been so long away from her people she feared to return, old and worn, to the scenes of her childhood.

Happy she is now, for Willow still

lives, and together they sit talking of the happy times that long have passed away.

Daily Antelope grew in strength, and soon he was able to climb to the ground and stroll about the fields at the foot of the cliffs. One day, with a few others, he determined to travel a short distance over the mountains, to a place which some of the huntsmen spoke of as being wonderful to see. Gazelle did not think him strong enough, but he said that the walk would help strengthen him to commence his travel back to his pueblo.

The people did not wish him to leave, but continue as chief of the tribe when he married Gazelle; and though Gazelle would rather have remained with her people, she only wished what he desired, for home was only where Antelope was.

Antelope thought of his mother in his far-off home, for he longed for the quiet and rest of his village, far from war's

alarms. So he daily prepared himself for the long journey by walking over the hills and mountains. The journey he went this particular day was long and rough, and he grew very weary as the time went on, till at last one of the guides said: "There it is, where yon mountain rears its rugged height."

They clambered up the sides from a small stream that meandered over the sand, and reaching the summit, they came upon a basin in the top of the mountain. Trees grew upon the cliffs, and hollow caves showed where many people might dwell in their shelter, while filling the bottom of the rounded space, a lake of pellucid water reflected the blue of the sky above. Not a breath of air disturbed the surface, and the men saw themselves reflected within its azure depths. So quiet and serene it seemed, the men began to fear that spirits dwelt there, while the more

timid, turned to leave its uncanny influence. But Antelope and one or two others clambered down the sides, until they reached the water's edge.

Antelope carried a long stick with which he vainly strove to touch the bottom, but ever as he tried it seemed but father off and its depth marvelous.

The men climbed down to the stream fed from the hidden lake, and camped beneath some walnut trees for the night.

They all were quiet, tired perhaps from the long walk or fearing the spirits which fly around, as soon as the sun sinks to rest. Some of them shivered at the stillness and heaped more wood upon the burning fire, until it blazed and crackled, casting weird shadows upon the ground, but the faces of the men glowed in the bright flames and it gave them a more cheerful appearance in spite of the coyotes howling in the distance seemingly so far away.

One of the braves stood upright beneath a tree and silently stood on guard, while the rest of the party soon stretched upon the ground, and in spite of their fear fell fast asleep.

The next morning they awoke refreshed and rested with their night's sleep. All thoughts of the evil spirits had fled, and they talked volubly of the wonderful lake in the mountain above.

Gazelle was delighted when they returned, tired and dust-covered from their journey. And Antelope was glad to rest after the long walk, for he was not yet as strong as he should be.

He was anxious to make Gazelle his wife, and the tribe were getting in readiness for the feast which should accompany the nuptials.

Adobe had determined to make Sun-ray his bride, though Serpent had given his consent grudgingly, for he longed to have her remain in the tribe.

But Adobe had given so many valuables that he could not resist and so the two were to be wedded at the same time with Antelope and Gazelle.

A double wedding gave much joy to the people and all determined to have great pleasure on the auspicious day which was soon to mark the joining of the couples.

CHAPTER XV.

THE day had arrived for the weddings, concerning which the women were all excitement. Gazelle and Sunray had been taken charge of by the married ones and blushing they received their every attention.

The women carefully bathed and oiled their bodies, clothing them with new garments and afterward hanging many ornaments upon their necks, while the bracelets on their wrists rattled with every movement.

Antelope and Adobe had been seized by the men, who saw that they were washed and clothed in their wedding garments. The hair was carefully combed, as it hung untied round their faces, and their white teeth gleamed as they smiled with delight at their many jokes.

The women had collected twigs of the cottonwood and other trees, and wreaths were made, so that the castle looked quite festive in its decking of foliage. Then were the couples led before the people, and Serpent, placing Gazelle beside Antelope, where she looked beautiful indeed, as she stood trembling and blushing close to him. The women spoke laughingly to them. And Antelope beamed proudly upon his bride, as manly and erect he stood near her.

Then Adobe and Sunray drew near, Sunray with quick step and pert manner, while Adobe seemed slow and bashful as he faced the public gaze. The tribe said that two more beautiful brides had never wedded before.

Then Serpent, taking some of their leafy twigs which had been prepared for the occasion, carefully bound them round the arms of the men and women, as they stood side by side, and amid the accla-

mations of the tribe, the couples were tied together for life.

The next day Antelope determined to start on his way back to his pueblo, and his bearers were preparing the bundles and the food for the long journey.

At last all was in readiness, and the party, which consisted of four bearers, the two couples and the mother of Gazelle, stood early one morning receiving the adieus of the tribe. Many moons would wane before they reached their home, and who knew what dangers would assail them before they rested from their journey?

Many of the tribe accompanied them as they started out, but on reaching the river where Arrow had met the traders, the last good-bys were said, and the cliff dwellers left the travelers with sad faces, for little chance was there of their ever meeting again.

Gazelle was delighted with all she saw,

and she and Sunray were never tired of gathering the wonderful things they came across on the way. Adobe and Antelope kept their larder well stocked, for many small animals they saw darting from rock to rock, or scouring across the barren land.

Some days had passed when they came to the river, down which the flood had carried death to the poor bearer, and a tiny stream wandered from side to side as it endeavored to reach some larger river. But here it left the light of day, to sink deep beneath the sand, till lower down it rose, quickly running between the rocky sides.

The men had failed to keep together and one more vigorous than the rest had proceeded some distance ahead.

A faint cry was heard in the distance, and on getting nearer the spot from where the cry came, the head and shoulders only of the bearer was seen above the sand.

Antelope rushed forward, but the bearer waved him back, for the man had carelessly stepped into a quicksand.

The others debated what they should do, and at last they gathered many branches, to lay them on the sand. A rope was thrown over the sinking man, and the excited companions dragged with might and main, until at last the frightened bearer was drawn safely to dry ground.

That night they camped upon the sand, listening to the croak of the many frogs or the mournful cry of the snipe as they waded through the water in search of food. Thankful indeed were they that no life had been lost in the treacherous stream, and that they all lay sleeping round the campfire's warmth.

Gazelle would hardly let Antelope leave her side though sometimes in his anxiety he would hurry on ahead, for the party moved slowly, cumbered as it

was with women, one of them old and worn out with her hardships.

But at last they reached the Castle of Hills, and as no savage had been near for some time, Antelope decided to stay here and rest.

Dancing-feet was delighted yet sad at seeing her deserted home, and daily she led Gazelle about the grounds, now lying untilled and overgrown with weeds.

"Here!" she said, "as I stooped to the water in this ditch, now dry and all filled up, I was seized by the savage warrior and in spite of all my struggles, carried away into captivity.

"Many a time I waited for your father as he came bearing the produce of the ground from the fields, beside yon rock, and received his smile of welcome as he greeted me.

"And this old castle contains many remembrances of friends long since dead. I feel as if I could not leave it more, and

that here I could lay me down and die."

Gazelle saw sadly how ruined the whole place looked, since they deserted it so long ago. "What grief have we felt since we left its sheltering walls," she thought. Antelope consoled her and said that their troubles would soon be o'er, for the way was more traveled from this part and the journey would not be so difficult.

He soon decided they must proceed, and though the old woman complained of the stiffness of her joints, and the pains she suffered, he would not wait longer, and said he should lead her where hot water rising from the ground would take all her pains away. She was doubtful, but his constant urgings induced her at last to hobble on her way.

One hot day they reached a sandy stream, and the coolness of the water rippling in its bottom was most pleasant

to them. They passed by huge cliffs that appeared to rear themselves miles above them, it seemed to Gazelle, who was much surprised at their different shapes. Sunray thought them very dismal and that they needed brightening a little; but she always wanted sunshine and brightness.

Antelope said they were approaching the famous springs which the spirits ever heated ere they bubbled from the rocks, and upon turning up a little cañon which seemed covered with foliage and flowers, and where numerous giant cacti flourished among the rocks, they found a clear stream of water, which ran toward the larger stream.


Gazelle was walking with only sandals on her feet, and she stepped into the water thinking to cool them as she walked. She gave a scream of surprise, for the seemingly cool stream almost burned her feet.

Antelope laughed at her surprise, and leading her farther up the cañon, showed the cliffs with their sides covered with a green oozy moss, which, growing too freely, fell from the bowlders, and was washed farther down. From the smooth sides of an upright wall the boiling water bubbled clear and bright, and a small pool at the foot formed a bathing place in which travelers bathed their tired bodies.

This, Antelope said, would remove all the pain from Dancing-feet's limbs, so he prepared a spot near by to camp upon, since he determined to stay here some days.

Several times a day the wanderers bathed in the clear, boiling waters, and soon the pains of old age left the woman's limbs and she again grew young and sprightly.

Wonderful it seemed to her as she clambered up the sides in search of ber-



ries and roots, and much she spoke in praise of the health-giving stream. But they could not linger longer, for they were still some distance from the pueblo, and Antelope was anxious to reach his home.

The three women would have lingered longer in this bower of health, breathing the balmy air of the cañon, ever warmed by the heat of the waters. But Antelope urged them on, and at last they set out one morning for the distant pueblo.

Long was the way, and the dust, fine and dry, seemed to rise even before they stepped upon it.

The bearers, heavily loaded, trudged along slowly, and but for that the women could not have kept pace with the longer strides of the men.

Still, in spite of their slow traveling, they reached one night the hills that surrounded the village of their destination.

Antelope and Adobe had given long

descriptions of the joys and pleasures to be found in their old home—the beautiful spring that bubbled from the ground—the green fields covered with corn and watered by the many ditches that crossed and recrossed their surface; the pumpkins that grew to sizes too immense to relate, and, above all, the tribal home, built upon a rising ground, whose rocky soil would not grow vegetation. Full three stories high was this haven of rest, and three tiers of ladders carried them to the castle's roof, whence openings led into the rooms below. No enemy could enter the castle, and never were the ladders left, no matter how peaceable the tribes might seem to be, when the sun had sunk behind the distant hills and night spread its sable mantle over the wide, wide world.

“And are there no cliffs to build the castles in?” questioned Gazelle.

“No,” answered Adobe, proudly ex-

panding his breast; "so strong are our castles built that no enemy can harm them, though they hammer their base the livelong day."

"How strange," remarked Sunray, at which Dancing-feet seemed much amused.

Dancing-feet seemed in a quiver of excitement as she drew nearer her birth-place, and soon she began to recognize the old landmarks, though so many years had passed since she had wandered from them.

One balmy day they reached the level country, and in the distance the square brown castle was seen upon a rising mound. As they drew nearer, following the well-worn trails, they met some men bearing their implements of toil. These turned toward them, and on seeing Antelope and Adobe, cast them to the ground in sheer surprise, then rushing forward seized them by the hands.

"Long have we mourned for you," said one, "though your mother ever said, 'they will return,' 'they will return;' but we were certain that the lone desert hid your bones, and that never more should we see you alive."

One man suddenly left them and tearing across the fields, leaping the ditches, bore the welcome news to the castle. Soon all was excitement, and the women and children were seen climbing to the ground below, and led by the tribesmen, came shouting and crying to meet the wanderers. Behind the old women straggled, and one more bent than the rest seemed unable to walk farther. Soon were they surrounded by the tribe, who plied them with questions, eying with curious glances the three women, who, though evidently members of some pueblo tribe, were clothed so differently, and were strangers to them.

Antelope said: "Is my mother living?"

I see her not;" till one leading her, she slowly came to throw herself with joyful cries upon her son's breast.

"And this is the wife you promised to bring, Antelope, this beautiful girl? Surely you are blessed above all men. But who is she? The daughter of Dancing-feet, my old playmate?" She turned toward the old woman, who clasped her hand and silently the tears rolled down their withered cheeks as they met. "So you have returned, Dancing-feet, to the home of your childhood? Happy, happy must you be, now your wanderings are over."

The people led them to the castle, and Gazelle noticed how like the walls were to her home in the cliffs. Here the well-mixed clay, there the jagged rock, and the ladders almost seemed taken from the Castle of Hills. Filled with joy was the girl that her wanderings were o'er, and happy was she to find herself in the

home of her mother, after so many dangers and hardships.

Antelope led her to the top of the castle, and leaning over the ramparts, they gazed across the green fields. Beautiful they seemed as the sun, shining crimson red, sunk slowly in the horizon, tinging all with its glorious hue; and joyful indeed was the girl, though sad when she thought of her father. Gazelle felt joy in her heart as the strong hand of the young chief clasped hers in his own while he welcomed her with gentle voice to the home of his fathers, the home of his pride.

Dancing-feet was never tired of showing her daughter her childish haunts, and with Gazelle lived over again, all the joys of her childhood so long past.

THE END.

A CONJUROR OF PHANTOMS

BY

JOHN W. HARDING

AUTHOR OF "THE STROLLING PIPER OF BRITTANY,"

"A BACHELOR OF PARIS," ETC., ETC.

Cloth, \$1.00; Paper, 50 Cents

IS a striking work of imagination. It is based upon the novel and truly extraordinary subject of the "science of sensations," and abounds in bizarre situations and effects. It is the story of Archibald Danvers, a young man of æsthetic tastes, gifted—or rather cursed—with what the author describes as "ultra-sensitiveness," and who, in his hunt for happiness, through illusion, aided by the "science of sensations," as revealed to him by old Peter Zadowski, its eccentric exponent, is led on to moral perdition. A mysterious herb supposed to be in Zadowski's possession, and which Danvers vainly seeks to procure, is one of the chief causes of the latter's demoralization and is indirectly the cause of a miracle under peculiarly sensational circumstances. Danvers realizes that illusion, even when developed to a fine art and aided by the science of sensation, cannot be sustained indefinitely, is not all-sufficing; and desires the herb as a last resort when he shall have wrung out of existence all that there is of illusion and pleasure of the senses in it. For the herb is no ordinary vegetable and there is no comparison between its effects and those of opium or haseesh: "It is unknown to modern science. Mundane joys lose their savor and have no further interest for those who have sniffed it. They will have none of them, despising even the wiles of women. In fact, they are filled with aversion for mere mortal syrens, even those whom they previously held dear, and for whom they would have stooped to any folly. A person desirous of committing hari-kari could shuffle off this mortal coil in spasms of bliss by absorbing a piece of the herb no bigger than the head of a pin." His burglarious search for it in Zadowski's house one night brings him in contact with the scientist's daughter Ruth, a strange, unique character. The meeting is fraught with fateful consequences that must be read in their natural sequence to be appreciated. Not the least artistic episode in the story is the description by Zadowski of the pleasures that can be evoked by the contemplation of jewels; and the explanation of their origin by the old æsthete is particularly fanciful. Here are a few instances:

"These pale opals, gems of mystery and mourning, are the tears that fishers lured to their doom by the heartless syrens shed, and that the kiss of the moonbeams froze as they fell." "Diamonds are shooting stars that showered from the trail of the Pleiades when the seven sisters were borne on high to grace the breast of the bull in the Zodiac." "Topazes are grain shed from the bouquet of Ceres." "Carbuncles are embers that dropped from the Empyrean when Satan and his hosts were hurled from the ethereal sky with hideous combustion down to bottomless perdition." And the old man, in his excitement, concluding his description, exclaims: "Pearls, diamonds, sapphires, topazes, amethysts, emeralds, rubies, opals, carbuncles—I shake them from the trees in Aladdin's magic garden. I gather them into glittering mountains, I strew them over the universe as dew for the flowers. I scoop them up in handfuls and fling them into the air, into the glorious sunshine; they stream down again off the rainbow in dazzling torrents of light and fire, and I catch them in cups of beryl, chrysoberyl, turquoise, sardonyx, jasper, crystal, moonstone, toadstone, sard, lapis lazuli, carnelian, coral, jet, and amber snatched from the banquet board of the gods!"

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WHAT SAYEST THOU?

BY

JOHN B. POWELL

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IS an American novel, just issued, of and for Americans and others, by an American author, John B. Powell, of Milwaukee, Wis. Once in a while something appears in novel literature stripped of the warp and weft of the mills of old and familiar romance. "What Sayest Thou?" has such a delightful quantity of different and fresh material, texture, color, and finish that, irresistibly, apprenticeship of reading soon becomes a permanent occupation, for phases of mental, moral, physical, social, political, and religious regimes, out of the ordinary, are seen in the life, character, and associations of a man of the common people. One phase is remarkable. A sweep of mind is shown which from its first activity promises imbecility, but as age adds to its strength, it broadens in striking brilliancy, at which, and the possibilities of the man, medical men will marvel but not dispute. Criticism will come from society people for the photographing of their inner realms, for "moral nudity," if there is such an exhibition, is uncovered, offending, however, only the excessively squeamish. Questions which have for centuries disturbed and still disturb the religious world are given fresh emphasis. American "machine" politics are thoroughly lubricated with the oil of actuality. American society and fraternal life are presented, concerning each and all of which the author shrewdly propounds the query, "What Sayest Thou?"; but it is doubtful if readers will reply to the letter-chain in the title. Entirely new, novel, and original in fact, fiction, and romance, is the introduction of ancient and modern secret societies to the class of literature to which the book belongs. It is evident that the author is a ritualist and a memorist and an authority not to be disputed; and nowhere is this more apparent than in his description of the "Ancient Egyptian Rite of the Memphian Shrine." All these phases are brought out in the life and character and associations of plain, simple John Rodman and Mary, his wife, a village girl, well educated, of well-to-do parents, who, braving ridicule, contempt, and advice, marries and meets fate with the man of her choice. The son of these two and his wife, the beautiful daughter of a wealthy and distinguished Mexican, are clearly real and living; in fact, many of the characters are so real that even fictitious names scarcely conceal their identity. There is also a graceful failure to screen the fact that Mr. Powell is, or has been, a newspaper editor, writer, and reporter; yet he must be credited with a style and strength of thought and construction that reaches finish and perfection. In these respects he has greatly improved upon his "Surrendered," "The Minister's Lodge," and other works, the most pleasing improvement being an avoidance of all heavy or labored sentences. The story is built upon a solid foundation of substantial material, neatly finished in its exterior and interior, and just commodious enough to move about in with ease, comfort, and interest. The book is charming, will last and become popular, but may encounter the critics notwithstanding it will attract and interest all classes and professions.

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